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CONVERGING TRUTHS

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EURIPIDES' *ION* AND THE ATHENIAN QUEST FOR SELF-DEFINITION

BY

KATERINA ZACHARIA

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ΤΟΙΣ ΓΟΝΕΥΣΙ

ταύτας δὲ μή ποτε τιμᾶς
ἀμείρειν γονέων βίον πεπρωμένον

'Do not deny your parents the honour of such reverence
as long as they live'
Pindar, *Pythian* VI.26–7

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ABBREVIATIONS

The Abbreviations of journals follow the conventions of *L'Anneé Philologique*. Abbreviations of the names of Greek authors and their works follow or are fuller versions of those in *LSJ*^{9}.

CID	G. Rougement, *Corpus des Inscriptions de Delphes* (Paris, 1977).
DK	H. Diels and W. Kranz, *Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*. 6th edn. (Berlin, 1952).
FGrH	F. Jacoby, *Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*, 15 vols. (Berlin, 1923–30; Leipzig, 1940–58).
IEG^{2}	M.L. West, *Iambi et Elegi graeci*, 2 vols, 2nd edn. (Oxford, 1989–92).
IG	*Inscriptiones Graecae*
K-A	R. Kassel and C. Austin, *Poetae Comici Graeci* (Berlin and New York, 1983–).
LGPN	P.M. Fraser & E. Matthews, *Lexicon of Greek Personal Names*, 4 vols (Oxford, 1987–2000).
LIMC	*Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* (Zurich and Munich, 1981–97).
LSJ^{9}	H.G. Liddell and R. Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 9th edn., rev. H. Stuart Jones (Oxford, 1940).
ML	R. Meiggs and D. Lewis, *A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions to the End of the Fifth Century BC*, revised edn. (Oxford, 1988).
M-W	R. Merkelbach and M.L. West, *Fragmenta Hesiodea* Oxford, 1967).
N^{2}	A. Nauck, *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*, 2nd edn. (Leipzig, 1889; repr. with suppl. by B. Snell).
OCD^{3}	S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth, *Oxford Classical Dictionary*. 3rd edn. (1996).
OGIS	W. Dittenberger, *Orientis Graeci Inscriptiones Selectae* (Leipzig, 1903–05).
Pfeiffer	R. Pfeiffer, *Callimachus* 1–2 (Oxford, 1949–53).
PMG	D.L. Page (ed.), *Poetae melici Graeci* (Oxford, 1962).
PMGF	M. Davies, *Poetarum Melicorum Graecorum Fragmenta* (1991).

Snell-Maehler	B. Snell & H. Maehler, *Bacchylides* (Teubner, 1970; repr. 1992).
TGrF	B. Snell, R. Kannicht, S. Radt (eds.), *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta* (Göttingen, 1971–).

Euripides' Ion: *Editions and Commentaries*

The following editions are cited by author's name alone.

Hülsemann	F. Hülsemann, *Euripidis Ion* (Leipzig, 1801).
Hermann	G. Hermann, *Euripidis Ion* (Leipzig, 1827).
Badham	C. Badham, *Euripides Ion* (London, 1853).
Paley	F.A. Paley, *Euripides*, vol. ii. (London, 1858).
Bayfield	M.A. Bayfield, *The Ion of Euripides* (London, 1889).
Verrall	A.W. Verrall, *The Ion of Euripides* (Cambridge, 1890).
Jerram	C.S. Jerram, *Euripides Ion* (Oxford, 1896).
Grégoire	H. Grégoire, *Euripide*, vol. iii. (Paris, 1923).
Wilamowitz	U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Euripides' Ion* (Berlin, 1926).
Owen	A.S. Owen, *Euripides' Ion* (Oxford, 1939).
Italie	G. Italie, *Euripides' Ion* (Leiden, 1948).
Lucas	D.W. Lucas, *The Ion of Euripides* (London, 1949).
Ammendola	G. Ammendola, *Euripides' Ion* (Florence, 1951).
Imhof	M. Imhof, *Euripides' Ion*: Eine literarische Studie (Bern and München, 1966).
Burnett	A.P. Burnett, *Ion* by Euripides (Chicago, 1970).
Ebener	D. Ebener, *Euripides*, vol. iv. (Berlin, 1977).
Biehl	W. Biehl, *Euripides' Ion* (Leipzig, 1979).
Diggle	J. Diggle, *Euripidis Fabulae*, vol. ii. (Oxford, 1981).
Lee	K.H. Lee, *Euripides' Ion* (Warminster, 1997).
Kovacs	D. Kovacs, *Euripides*, vol. iv: *Trojan Women, Iphigeneia among the Taurians, Ion* (Harvard, 1999).

PREFACE

This book grew out of a doctoral thesis I submitted to the University of London, in late 1996. That thesis was thoroughly revised, greatly expanded and turned into this book. In my early research years, I began working on the reception of Euripides. It was during this period that I first read the *Ion* and was fascinated by its version of the foundation myth of Athens. Euripides in a time of crisis for Athens staged a play which went to the heart of Athenian self-perception but also highlighted the violent *charis* ('grace') of Apollo, the intense emotional suffering of Kreousa, and Ion's insistent search for truth despite divine concealment. The sheer strength of the human emotions appeared to overturn the divine plan of Apollo while the power of speech appeared to shift from the oracular Apollo, now turned silent, to vociferous Kreousa and vehement Ion. This aspect of the play piqued my interest and I set off for a rewarding journey of exploration into the historical and intellectual context of late fifth-century BC which sparked Euripides' imagination in his final period of production, the period of the 'problem plays'. Interestingly, the *parrhesia* ('frankness in speaking the truth') of the human characters in this play also intrigued Michel Foucault who included a lecture on the *Ion* in a series of seminars on 'Discourse and Truth' he gave in the fall of 1983 at UC Berkeley.

This book is primarily a study of the *Ion* of Euripides, but also looks at some other late Euripidean tragedies. I argue that the *Ion* was produced in Athens at the Dionysia of 412 BC, together with the surviving *Helen* and the lost *Andromeda*. The spring of 412 was a period of intense political crisis at Athens, in the bewildering and demoralized interval between the failure of the Athenian expedition against Sicily in 415–413 BC and the oligarchic revolution of 411 BC. My account of the *Ion* seeks to explain the play's two great themes, namely autochthony and Ionianism (the Ionian character of Athens), in terms of the shadow cast by imperial and domestic events. The first of these themes, autochthony, has been given ample coverage in recent examinations of the play and of Athenian ethnicity in general. The Ionian theme by contrast has hardly featured at all. Ionianism is one of my main new contributions to the understanding

of the *Ion* and its importance. I aim to show how the two themes, autochthony and Ionianism, are conceptually related with Apollo, providing an important link between the two. Above all I shall show how Euripides' emphatic assertion of Ionianism in 412 makes excellent sense at a time when the Athenians were anxious to keep the loyalty of their east Aegean allies at a time of acute imperial vulnerability.

The metaphor of shadow is appropriate for the mood of the Athenians just a few months after their greatest military catastrophe of the century. But the *Ion*, though certainly a tragedy and not a comedy or a generic hybrid, is not sombre: it opens with sunlight at Delphi, and juxtaposes Delphi and Athens, city and sanctuary, country and town, innocence and experience, in a way which anticipates pastoral poetry of a later period of Greek literature. Nor on the other hand is it escapist: Athena's closing prophecy is rooted firmly in the imperial present and is essentially optimistic. It is (I argue) both proud and defiant, and yet at the same time conciliatory towards actually or potentially disaffected subject allies, the Ionian colonial 'children' of the 'mother-city' Athens.

The sub-title of my book refers to the issues of ethnicity, that is of Athenian self-definition and identity, which I have referred to above as autochthony and Ionianism. My main title signifies the intellectual as opposed to the political program of the *Ion*. I argue that in his *Ion* Euripides uses a combination of autonomous and equally valid discourses—what the Russian literary critic Mikhail Bakhtin has called 'polyphony'—for creative purposes, in fact to get at the truth. Or rather, the 'dialogistic' technique (in another Bakhtinian term) is a way of expressing different and, in this case, *converging truths*.

I hope that as a result of this book, *Ion* may take its rightful place alongside such obvious classics as Aeschylus' *Eumenides* and Euripides' own *Supplices* as one of the most explicitly political tragedies to come down to us from fifth-century Athens. But the real analogy may be with a play which does not survive, Phrynichus' play dealing with the fall of Miletus at the end of the Ionian Revolt (500–494 BC). At the beginning and end of the fifth century, the century of the Athenian Empire with its strongly Ionian flavour, a tragedian addressed the sensitive and crucial issue of Athens' Ionianism.

I have aimed to write a monograph on the *Ion* that will hopefully contribute to the scholarly debate in Euripidean studies, but also be

accessible to the neophyte without oversimplifying the issues. To this effect, I give information on some matters that are more widely known among scholars but may be illuminating for the non-specialist reader. I also offer translations of all quotations but still keep the Greek in the text. The edition here used for the *Ion* is the Oxford Classical Text by Diggle and the translations are based primarily on Burnett, Kovacs and Lee. For ancient texts I follow the OCT editions and use the Loeb or the Aris & Phillips translations, where available. All other translations and all translations from modern languages are my own, unless otherwise stated.

I was fortunate to have received both the academic support of some of the most renowned scholars in the field and the generous financial support of a number of institutions. I wish to thank the A.G. Leventis Foundation for awarding me a research grant for work on my doctoral thesis in 1992–95 and a Special Post-doctoral Research Fellowship in 1998–2000 to complete work on my chapter on Apollo. I also wish to thank my teachers and colleagues at the Department of Greek and Latin at University College London for awarding me a one-year faculty position in 1997–98 and an honorary Research fellowship in 1998–99. This allowed me to organize and participate in a number of seminars in the department and be in the company of some of the most exciting classical scholars both at the department and at the Institute of Classical Studies where I first tried out some of the ideas that found their way into the book. I would like to express my gratitude to my former colleagues Alan Griffiths, Simon Hornblower and Herwig Maehler for the stimulating discussions and unfailing support over the many years of formation and maturation of the ideas that made this book. I would also like to thank Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles for facilitating my research work in numerous ways, including awarding me a summer grant in 2000 for research work on Athenian civic identity and kinship diplomacy in fifth century BC, and a six-month fellowship in spring 2002 to complete this book.

I would like to express my gratitude to my thesis supervisor, Pat Easterling, for the rewarding years of my doctoral dissertation at University College, London; my examiner Richard Buxton for believing in this work and for his kind comments; and to Glenn Most for his incisive criticism and for his friendship. I would also like to acknowledge my sincere appreciation for their helpful comments on drafts of parts or the whole of this work to: Colin Austin, James

Diggle, Richard Hunter, Robert Parker, James Redfield, Richard Rutherford and the anonymous readers of the press.

This book is gratefully dedicated to my parents for teaching me the true meaning of Athenian *parrhesia* and the virtues of constructive dialogue, for their abundant love and for the beauty of their souls.

Loyola Marymount University
Los Angeles, California

CHAPTER ONE

FROM DELPHI TO ATHENS

1.1. Curtain-raiser: Delphi, March 412 BC

At the end of March 412 BC the real-life sanctuary of Delphi was a noisy place. A fine new marble building—the first to be commissioned for several years—was being built next to the Sacred Way. The surrounding cliffs, the Shining Rocks or *Phaidriades*, echoed with the shouts of the masons, and with the relentless impact of chisel and hammer on metal and stone. The new building was the *thesauros* (Treasury) of the Syracusans, a grandiose dedication to the god Apollo in celebration of the Syracusan annihilation of the Athenian expeditionary force towards the end of the previous summer.[1] As it happened, the Athenian defeat had roughly coincided with the great festival of the 'Pythia', held at Delphi every fourth August, in the year before the Olympic festival whose next celebration would be in 412. By the time the Syracusan sacred envoys, the *theoroi*, set off from the Great Harbour for Greece, Delphi and the Pythian festival, the outcome of the two-year war in Sicily was not in doubt, and the *theoroi* no doubt took the opportunity to seal the god's favour by the promise of a lavish construction to be paid for 'from the spoils of the Athenian defeat'. The building itself was provocatively positioned opposite the Athenian treasury, whose inscription proclaimed that it was built out of the booty of the battle of Marathon in 490.[2] Between the Athenians and the Syracusans, Pythian Apollo—so men said—had already indicated where his sympathies and intentions lay: back in 415, crows had for a period of several days running pecked at another Athenian dedication at Delphi from the Persian-war period, a bronze palm-tree which supported a Palladion or statue of armed Athena.[3]

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[1] Paus. 10.11.5.

[2] *ML* 1969: 19, the main part of the building may be older than the inscription.

[3] Plut. *Nic.* 13.

Less than two hundred kilometers away there was, in this same month March 412, no such noise of construction work at another of the great sacred places of Greece, the acropolis of Athens. All unnecessary public works had recently been suspended for financial reasons.[4] Before the Sicilian expedition, the Athenians had commissioned one of their most truculent monuments of the whole imperial period, the sculptured parapet of Athena Nike, Athena of Victory; the sacrifice there depicted was a military *sphagia* or pre-battle animal killing, brimming over with aggressive and self-confident symbolism.[5] That monument was now complete. But another big acropolis project, the Erechtheum, stood half-finished in March 412, perhaps a temporary victim of the very same economy measures which Thucydides describes. This shrine to Erechtheus, mythical king of Athens and father of Kreousa, was a building with rather different and more reflective connotations than the Nike parapet: its message concerned the inalienable mythical past of the city,[6] and was thus less ephemeral than the imperialistic exuberance which had been punctured at Syracuse. The Athenians would not resume work on the Erechtheum until some year later than 413/2. But resume it they did, and the building, begun in 421, the year following the production of Euripides' *Erechtheus*, was completed in about 406.[7]

Now, in 412, the hammers and chisels were silent for the moment on the acropolis, but they were loud and busy in the city below, and in the Piraeus, and at Sounion to the south, where the new emergency fortifications were, at this desperate moment, intended more for the protection of the shipsheds than for Poseidon's temple. The months which ensued on the catastrophe in Syracuse were a dark time for Athens: civic morale was shattered, faith in democracy was beginning to fail, and the dockyards and treasury were all but empty. Despite all that, the Athenians now showed a resilience which Thucydides found it impossible not to admire. At the beginning of book Eight, he describes the mood when the news from

[4] Th. 8.4: εἰ πού τι ἐδόκει ἀχρεῖον ἀναλίσκεσθαι, ξυστελλόμενοι ἐς εὐτέλειαν, 'they also, for economy, reduced any other expenses that seemed unnecessary' (tr. Crawley, in Strassler 1996).

[5] Jameson 1994.

[6] Note that if Connelly 1996 is right, the great Parthenon itself (a building of the third quarter of the century) also carried 'Erecththeid' themes. But this theory is conjectural.

[7] See Stevens *et al.*, 1927: 452–56; Travlos 1971: 213–14.

Sicily percolated through: initially incredulity and anger, then blame for the politicians and soothsayers, and fear of immediate enemy attack on the Piraeus. But nevertheless the Athenians determined not to give in but to get timber for a new fleet from wherever they could, and to submit to tight financial discipline.[8]

The worst fear was for the loyalty of the empire. The subjects of the Athenians thought that the old oppressor was finished, and the Athenians, well aware of this, voted to do all they could to avert rebellion. The military narrative of book Eight of Thucydides is dominated by events in the East Aegean, centering on Ionia. There were Ionians in the west (Sicily) and north (Chalkidike), where for historical reasons they were known as Chalkidians.[9] But the original Ionia was in the east Aegean (the geographical, religious and emotional centres of Ionianism were, apart from Athens itself, the Panionion near Asiatic Mykale on land, and Cycladic Delos by sea). By the end of Thucydides' narrative in 411 the imperial Athenian crisis had been surmounted without the wholesale defection of Ionia which had seemed to be on the cards in the months after autumn 413; but in March 412 the issue of the relation between the Ionians and their wounded but still dangerous metropolis, Athens, was still intensely topical.

1.2. Euripides' *Ion*: Performance Date and Plot-Summary

The *Ion* is not one of the handful of Euripides' plays for which we have a securely attested date,[10] but metrical considerations, above all the frequency of resolved iambic feet, suggest a date close to *Troades* of 415. One plausible view, which I hope to strengthen,[11] assigns it

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[8] Th. 8.1; note esp. the appointment of the *probouloi*, senior figures with uncertain executive powers. This was not exactly an oligarchic move nor was it straightforwardly compatible with traditional democratic institutions. See Andrewes 1981: 6–7 on Th. 8.1.3.; Rhodes 1981: 372–73. For Sounion, see Th. 8.4.

[9] See e.g. Th. 4.61.2.

[10] I do not know why John Gould in *OCD*^{3} 1996: 571 col. 2, entry on Euripides, lists *Ion* among the securely dated plays. He gives the date as 410.

[11] Enthoven 1880: 7–22; Webster 1967: 19, 163, 192–204 (arguing for *Helen*, *Andromeda* and *Ion* as a trio produced in 412). Lee 1997: 40 adopts the dating '*c.* 413' suggested, without argument, by Diggle 1981. The metrical resolution data place the *Ion* (and the *IT*) somewhere between 415 and 412; see Cropp & Fick 1985: 61. Although an earlier (418) dating is taken seriously by Leduc 1976 (cf.

to March 412, as one of a loosely-connected trio with the surviving and firmly dated *Helen* (which exhibits a number of detailed verbal parallels to *Ion*)[12] and the lost *Andromeda*. Arguments from lost plays and lost or partially lost trilogies are inevitably precarious; and it does not follow that verbal or thematic similarities impose identical times of composition.[13] But there are political considerations which also and independently speak for 412. That year, not long after the disastrous end of the Sicilian expedition and amid fears of a general imperial secession, is exactly right, given the marked emphasis on Ionianism at the beginning and end of the play.[14] (We may compare the appeal, in the *Lysistrata* of Aristophanes of 411, to the loyalties of the 'cities which are our colonists', line 583). A date later than 412 for *Ion* is, I suggest, most unlikely because of the stress on the four Ionian 'tribes' (civic sub-divisions) which are solemnly 'pre-

---

Owen xl), the traditional argument in favour of this is very thin (a supposed reference at line 1592 to Th. 5.52, Alcibiades' operations at Rhion) and is not supported by the metrical criteria. The most recent attempt to date the play is Klimek-Winter 1996, arguing for 410; although this late date is not entirely ruled out by the metrical criteria (which is a more certain guide with respect to the earlier date); see the political argument in my text against so late a date.

[12] Enthoven 1880: 14–17 lists the detailed verbal parallels: *Ion* 7/*Helen* 14, τά τ' ὄντα καὶ μέλλοντα; *Ion* 8, οὐκ ἄσημος (said about Athens)/*Helen* 16 οὐκ ἀνώνυμος (said about Sparta); see also the following (arranged *Ion*/*Helen*): 258/83; 259/86; 403/566; 521/575; 522/567; 524/437; 541/536; 576/934; 850/327; 854/728; 889/244; 1196/1537. We can add 1575/66. For further discussion of *Helen*, see below ch. 4.2 (pp. 160–61 and n. 50) and 4.4. (pp. 178–80). Wilamowitz, 1926: 24, found Endhoven's list of parallels between *Helen* and *Ion* attractive but thought that Endhoven was wrong to be seduced into demanding 'this very year', i.e. 412, and declined to date the play more precisely. See further below, n. 14.

[13] Such an approach, too mechanically followed, weakens the attempts of Gaspar 1900 to date those odes of Pindar for which we have no precise dates, i.e. (in effect) the *Nemean* and *Isthmian* odes.

[14] This has been disputed but on the crucial point I follow Wilamowitz's second and, in my view, better thoughts. Matthiessen 1963: 90 opted for 413, because in his view Athena's prophecy at lines 1581ff. (about Athenian colonisation of Ionia) makes poor sense 'after the revolt of the Ionian allies (412)'. This, as Matthiessen acknowledged, was a return to a position abandoned by Wilamowitz near the end of his life (Wilamowitz 1926: 24). But Wilamowitz was persuaded by Kranz (his Latin dissertation on the stasimon, later his book *Stasimon*, 1933) that a date later than 412 was indeed possible. That is, withdrew his earlier argument (Wilamowitz 1883: 242 n. 1 = 1972: 188 n. 1) that Athena's prophecy was 'simply unthinkable' after the break-up of the Athenian empire. On the contrary, so Wilamowitz rightly urged in 1926, this was exactly the moment for an emphatic reassertion of colonizing imperial claims. In any case, despite the crisis mood and some alarming developments, the empire did not suffer terminal break-up; the revolts were stemmed; fears outran reality. See Andrewes 1981: 8, Th. 8.2.2 (the empire about to break up) is exaggerated.

dicted' and listed in Athena's prophecy at the end. Now the Four Hundred oligarchs of the year 411—a detested regime—are usually and plausibly assumed to have tried to put the clock back to the days before Kleisthenes introduced his system of ten tribes at the end of the sixth century, and to have organized themselves on 'Solonian' principles; the number Four Hundred was meant[15] to recall the old four tribes of the time of Solon, who supposedly formed his new Council by taking a hundred councillors from each of those earlier tribes. In March 410 or 409, and probably even in March 411 itself, the foregrounding of those four tribes would have carried with it undesirable associations. (The Four Hundred were not inaugurated formally until the summer of 411, but their plans and plots were in train for months before that, and could have been the talk of the symposia from as early as winter 412/411).[16] In March 412 by contrast, the message of the four tribes would have been purely Ionian and imperial, uncontaminated by domestic distortions propagated by the right-wing Athenian junta of the following year.

At this moment of crisis Euripides, who was now in his final period of production, chose to stage a drama which went to the heart of Athenian self-perception. Apollo has raped the Athenian princess Kreousa, daughter of the Athenian king Erechtheus. This happened long enough ago for the offspring of that divine rape, a youth called Ion, to have reached adolescence. He had been exposed at birth by Kreousa and taken from Athens to Delphi by Apollo's brother Hermes, at Apollo's request. So much is analeptically revealed by Hermes in a prologue which brings out three themes of great importance in the play: first, autochthony, the double idea that the Athenians had both sprung from the earth (*gegeneis*; cf. line 20) and had thereafter always occupied the same land; second, the parallel between the Kreousa myth and an earlier phase of the myth of the Athenian royal house, involving the child Erichthonios and the daughters of Aglauros; and third, the idea that Ion will give his name to a settlement in Asia (this idea will be developed by Athena at the end of the play, who will add that Ion's sons will colonize Attica itself). When the action opens, the youth Ion is a happy temple-servant at

[15] So Rhodes 1981: 153, 400.

[16] See Andrewes 1981: 131 on Th. 8.54.4., cf. 1982: 472 for the probability that Pisander, on behalf of the oligarchs, began lobbying the political clubs in the winter of 412/411 (Th. 8.54).

Delphi, armed with broom and bow-and-arrow to keep the temple-fouling birds at bay (note the domesticated symbols of Apolline power), while Kreousa has married Xouthos, a well-meaning foreigner who has been naturalized at Athens as a reward for help in war. But the couple are childless and come to Delphi to consult the oracle about their problem (an authentic and homely touch, this, as we know from lead plaques found in modern times at the even older oracular shrine at Dodona near modern Ioannina).[17] Kreousa arrives at Delphi first because Xouthos is making a preliminary consultation of the lesser oracle of Trophonios at Lebadea. This device enables the playwright to introduce Kreousa and Ion to each other and to allow them to develop a relationship undistracted by any third party except the chorus of Kreousa's maidservants, represented as tourists who describe the mythical scenes on the Delphic reliefs in language heavy with symbolic significance for the unfolding play. Xouthos now bursts into the action; he has just been given an oracle by Delphic Apollo which he takes to mean that Ion is his son; it now emerges that Xouthos had once committed a sexual indiscretion during a Dionysiac festival at Delphi. Ion after initial distaste and hesitation believes this false version of his paternity and prepares to leave for Athens. Xouthos leaves the stage to offer sacrifices in honour of his son's birth; he will remain off stage for the rest of the play. The chorus break a pledge to Xouthos and tell Kreousa the news, adding that it implies permanent childlessness for Kreousa, who in her misery proceeds to recount and virtually relive the original rape in her monody. Egged on by an old paidagogos or family tutor, she plans to poison Ion. The plot fails because Apollo sends a dove to die in Ion's place and so alert him of the plot. Ion, who has undergone a notable transformation from the idealistic broom-wielding youth, now tries to kill Kreousa in angry retaliation. The Pythian Priestess emerges and reveals (indirectly, by means of tokens deposited with the exposed baby Ion) that Kreousa and Ion are mother and son. Athena now manifests herself to confirm that Ion's father is Apollo and predicts that Ion's four sons will colonize Attica and their descendants Ionia itself, and win glory—the idea which I call Ionianism. These four sons are the eponyms of the four

[17] On private concerns, such as childlessness, brought to the oracle, see Parke & Wormell 1956: 393–415 and Fontenrose 1978: 39–41. Cf. Parke 1967: 267–68, nos 7–9, for Dodona.

Ionian tribes which lasted at Athens until Kleisthenes replaced them with ten new ones at the end of the sixth century. But even after that they survived at Athens for religious purposes (in the festival of the Synoikia which celebrated the unification of Athens by Theseus); they also survived politically, and this is important, in some Ionian states and islands in the east Aegean. In other words, in precisely those states which Thucydides says were disaffected after 413.

Athena's speech ends with an announcement which also concludes the whole play: she will act as Ion's guide on the journey from Delphi to Athens. From the summary above it should be clear that throughout the *Ion*, Delphi and Athens are linked in a systematic and sophisticated way. It is the interaction between these two locales that we shall explore in the next section.

1.3. Delphi and Athens: The Two Dramatic Settings of the *Ion*

During the first part of the play (1–509), Delphi and Athens are presented as two locales existing in distinct, parallel planes in the minds of the dramatic characters. Hermes, Ion, Kreousa, Xouthos and the chorus, all bring in their personal memories of the two dramatic settings. The playwright sets out for the spectators the differing perspectives from which each one of the dramatic characters will view the ensuing action. Once the recognition between father and son occurs, and Kreousa and the old tutor plan and attempt to carry out the assassination plot against Ion but fail, the dramatic characters associated with the Athenian setting come into open conflict with those who stand for Delphi (510–1249). In the end, after the intervention of the Pythia, Athena and Apollo, Kreousa and Ion recognize each other, Kreousa reconciles herself with Apollo and Ion accepts his divine paternity and the defining role Apollo has in store both for himself and his descendants with respect to the reign of Athens and the colonization of Attica and Ionia (1250–1622). Athens and Delphi are established as successive, but harmonious locations in a single mythic continuum which covers the foundation myth of Athens and ends with an account of the Athenian-Ionian kinship myth establishing the aetiology for the Athenian colonization of the Aegean a couple of hundred years before the production date of the play.

Before we proceed with the sequential analysis of the play, some clarifications are needed regarding the dramatic setting of Delphi

and its oracle and the vocabulary used to refer to the oracular procedure. So far, we have spoken as if 'Delphi' were a unitary concept. But in fact it was several things. It was a sanctuary run (above all financially run) by a panhellenic multi-ethnos organization, the Delphic amphiktiony; it was also the location and the host of a four-yearly athletic and musical festival, the Pythia, the second most prestigious such event in the Greek world after the Olympic; this too was organized and controlled by the amphiktiony.[18] It was the seat of the greatest oracle of the Greek world, and this feature of Delphi was emphatically not controlled by the amphiktiony, or by any other human power.[19] Finally, Delphi was itself a polis: when we hear in historical texts of 'the Delphians', they appear to be functioning as a political community who can (as in Thucydides) be 'given' the sanctuary, or have it taken away from them and 'given back' to the Phokians; this can only refer to immediate and day-to-day control under the supreme supervision of the amphiktiony, a body which Thucydides, unlike Herodotus, avoids mentioning.[20]

In the *Ion*, the oracle is the paramount institutional feature of Delphi. The divination process is introduced early and emphatically: Hermes describes Phoibos [Apollo] sitting on the *omphalos*, the navel, and Ion refers to the Pythia sitting on the tripod (5–7; 91–3). But the language for consultation and its preliminaries is suggestive rather than precise. Thus Ion offers *proxenein*, i.e. to act as *proxenos* to Kreousa, who is pretending to have a friend in need of an oracle (335). Elsewhere in the play, the noun *proxenos* is used in an evidently technical or local sense of Delphic sponsor or host (551, 1039). But the verb in Ion's mouth is surely no more than an offer to take care of the interests of an outsider, in fact to help—a loose sense paralleled elsewhere in Euripides in a context which has nothing to do with Delphi.[21] So it would be wrong to use Ion's offer as evidence that women were barred from the sanctuary and needed an official male surrogate or sponsor.[22] Again, the offering of a *pelanos* is, so Ion tells

[18] Lefèvre 1998: 237.

[19] For the incorruptibility of the oracle (not affected by a tiny number of scandals), see Parker 1985.

[20] Th. 1.112; and see the Labyadai inscription, CID I no. 9, where the phratry of the Labyadai is a subdivision of the polis of Delphi. Th. and the amphiktiony: Hornblower 1992.

[21] Eur. *Med.* 724, Aigeus to Medea.

[22] So Fontenrose 1978: 216–17; Lee on 221b with Zacharia 1999; though women never actually enter the temple in this play, see Hoffer 1996: 298 n. 24.

the chorus, the necessary immediate preliminary to entry into the *muchos* or inner recess, and thus to oracular consultation.[23] The word *pelanos* is sometimes a technical term for bloodless offering,[24] but it is here used imprecisely for the sacrificial sheep mentioned a line or two later.[25]

The physical sanctuary is almost as prominent as the oracle, and sometimes 'oracle' in a locative or physical sort of way, is a virtual synonym for 'temple', a place you can go to (line 33: χρηστήρια, 66: μαντεῖον). The temple itself is referred to in a varied vocabulary.[26] But there is considerable simplification in that the innocent spectator of the play would think that Delphi consisted of just this one building, the main Apolline temple in its own *temenos* or precinct, rather than being, as in reality, a large, full and sprawling complex.[27] The surrounding terrain is impressively evoked (the 'radiant untrodden peaks' and 'rocky ridges of Parnassus', lines 86, 714–15), but there is nothing in the play about the magnificent double line of polis-dedicated Treasuries, the Sacred Way, the theatre, or the *stadion* or running-track.

This last, athletic, aspect—Delphi as the location of the quadrennial Pythian games—is referred to only in indirect ways: Kreousa uses a clearly athletic metaphor at one point (863), though this is perhaps no more than a typically Euripidean trick of speech. The banquet in the tent (1129ff.) may be an authentic reflection of the form taken by celebrations after victories in the Pythian games.[28] Slightly more explicit is Ion's half-comic denunciation of the birds, whom he orders away to the 'streams of Alpheius i.e. Olympia, or to the grove of the Isthmus'—in fact to two of the other three panhellenic sites of

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[23] See 226–29; this conditionally-expressed sentence is strong evidence (see above) that women are not barred provided they carry out the correct ritual.

[24] Amandry 1950: 88; Cropp on Eur. *Erechtheus fr.* 350; Owen on *Ion* 226, citing Eur. *Alc.* 851. Cf. also Eur. *Androm.* 1100f.

[25] This view is preferable, not so much because of the strength of the parallels for *pelanos* in the sense of 'bloody sacrificial offering', as because dramatic poetry should not be interpreted as narrowly as the small print of an epigraphic *lex sacra*.

[26] The temple and sacred precinct are referred to as: χρηστήρια, literally 'oracles' (33), ναός-οί, a regular word for 'temple(s)' (38, 79, 111, 114, 140, 177), μαντεῖον, another word for 'oracle' (42, 66, 69, 130), δόμος-οι, literally 'house(s)' (45, 48, 129), ἀνάκτορα, (55).

[27] The word θυμέλη may refer to the sanctuary as a whole, but only in a very vague and general sort of way. For the sanctuary complex of Delphi, see Bommelaer & Laroche 1991.

[28] Schmitt-Pantel 1992: 218; see also below pp. 31ff.

athletic festivals.[29] This whole speech is notable for its 'marked' references;[30] thus the birds are specified as the eagle, Zeus' bird, and the musical swan, which stands for Apollo; the contemplated crime against the third or mother-bird might prefigure the attempted shooting of Kreousa.[31] (But the bird symbolism should not be over-interpreted,[32] nor at the other extreme is the description ornithologically exact: real swans do not have bright red feet.[33] On the other hand there is some evidence that Greek sanctuaries did indeed have a problem with birds fouling statues).[34]

What of the polis and political organization of Delphi? The local rulers (ἐπιχώριοι ἀρχαί, 1111) of the land, the people of the Delphians (Δελφῶν λαός, 1140), and the Pythian rulers (κοίρανοι Πυθικοί, 1219), all feature in the narrative of the foiled attempt to murder Ion; the lords of Delphi, the Δελφῶν ἄνακτες (1223), vote the death penalty against Kreousa (Cf. 1251, 'Pythian votes'), and the whole city, πᾶσα πόλις (1225), pursues her subsequently. In this phase of the plot, we are (despite the talk of kings and lords, which are merely synonyms for ἀρχαί, the authorities or magistrates) evidently meant to think of Delphi and the Delphians as a polis of a more or less normal sort.[35] Again there is simplification, in that the amphiktiony has disappeared from view—not because it was too prosaic (after all, two of Pindar's finest Pythian Odes find room for the word 'amphiktions'),[36] but simply because it did not suit Euripides' purpose to operate with more than the two basic communities: Delphi and Athens.

The following sequential analysis examines the movement of the plot from Delphi to Athens. The two long ekphraseis of the play (184–218; 1143–66) are examined in fuller detail because they aptly illustrate

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[29] Lines 174ff. The missing site is Nemea—just as Thucydides mentions the Pythia, the Olympia, and the Isthmia, but not the Nemean Games. Commentators have not picked up the significance of these allusions. For another interpretation, see Hoffer 1996: 298.

[30] For 'marked' as opposed to 'unmarked' language, see Nagy 1990: 5–8.

[31] Gavrilov 1994 links the eagle with Xouthos as the son of Zeus, and suggests the third bird is a nightingale.

[32] Giraud 1987: 85–8 presses the bird symbolism too hard; the three birds, for complicated reasons, are supposed to represent Ion's past, present and future life.

[33] Arnott 1996.

[34] Ridgway 1990; Dunbar 1995: 350–7, 357.

[35] See Hoffer 1996: 314, on the 'exaggerated political harmony of Delphi'.

[36] Pind. *Pyth.* 4.66; 10.8.

the relationship between Athens and Delphi. First there is mutual admiration between the two dramatic locales in the parodos, and then (mutual) antipathy and conflict in Ion's festival tent before the final resolution in the closing sequence. The imagery introduced anticipates and encapsulates some of the most pressing themes of the play, namely, the violence culture employs when taming nature[37] as seen in the imagery of the struggle against the inherently violent autochthonous forces and in the triumphant establishment of a higher order by the Olympian divinities; and, Ion's transition to adulthood and to Athens.

The background, differing levels of sophistication, and the different degrees of engagement of the dramatic characters with the unfolding action affect their interpretation of the events. For example, in the first ekphrasis the chorus offer an incomplete reading of the pedimental sculptures of the Delphic temple, because they can only discern what reminds them of Athens; their uncultivated view may be innocuous in this case of art-gazing, but nearly causes a fatal blow to Apollo's plan when it leads to an erroneous over-interpretation of the oracular response which in turn triggers the assassination plot against Ion.[38]

In this section I will also show how the nationalist discourse of imperial Athens in 412 BC is subtly communicated through the visual language of the second ekphrasis. And I shall also show how the interplay between Athens and Delphi relates to the monograph's larger project, i.e. showing Euripides' concern with enlisting the Ionian allies' assistance for Athens in 412, the year in which I have suggested the play was produced.

I. *Delphi and Athens in Parallel Planes (1–509)*

Prologue (1–183)

Hermes, brother of Apollo, opens the play. He identifies the dramatic setting as the Delphic oracular centre (5–7),[39] and goes on to introduce Athens (8ff.) as a second important locale related to the

[37] On violence in the play, see Hoffer 1996; Dunn 1990: 131–33; de Graft Hanson 1975; Wassermann 1940.

[38] See below n. 93.

[39] Inside the temple Apollo gives oracles about τά τ' ὄντα καὶ μέλλοντα, 'the

events preceding the dramatic action. He soon takes us on an imaginary journey back to Delphi, where from he had long ago transported the illegitimate son of the union between Apollo and Kreousa at his brother's request (28–36). In giving the reason for his visit, the messenger god extends the setting to include Athens, the famous city of Pallas (οὐκ ἄσημος Ἑλλήνων πόλις, τῆς χρυσολόγχου Παλλάδος κεκλημένη, 8–9),[40] and the Long Rocks (11–13), where Kreousa was raped and where she later exposed Apollo's son. The mythical Athenian past is also evoked briefly through the story of Erichthonios and the Aglaurids (21–6). In the dramatic present, the child who had once been exposed has grown up to become the treasurer of the god (53–56), and we see him performing his daily tasks as temple-servant while praising in a monody his blessed life in the Delphic precinct (129–40).[41]

In his opening lines Ion marvels at the effect of the morning sunlight first upon the familiar physical surroundings and then upon the architectural complex of the Delphic temple. By means of this verbal device of the description of a sunrise over the Delphic oracle, the audience's gaze is directed first towards Parnassus' peaks (the Phaedriades), the most conspicuous Delphic landmark, and then towards the Delphic oracle, from where we are told that fumes of myrrh are soaring up (89–90). Inside the building the Pythia is sitting upon the tripod,[42] chanting to the Greeks the cries Apollo sings to her ears alone (91–93).

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present and the future' (5–7). Hermes' accurate knowledge is limited to the prehistory of the drama. Concerning the future outcome of the plot, Hermes is less certain, so he retires into the laurel grove (76) and assumes the position of a silent eavesdropper, 'so that I may learn what has been accomplished concerning the boy', τὸ κρανθὲν ὡς ἂν ἐκμάθω παιδὸς πέρι, 77. On Hermes and Apollo, see also below ch. 3.2.

[40] Note how the speaker closely associates place and divinity: Delphi and Phoibos Apollo (5–7), Athens and Pallas Athena (8–9).

[41] For a similar presentation of menial tasks in highly poetical language, see Diggle 1970: 93 on Eur. *Phaethon* 58. On Ion's monody and his civilizing activities in the vicinity of Apollo's oracle, see Hoffer 1996: 295–99; also below ch. 3.6., pp. 128–29.

[42] This scene is commonly depicted on vase-paintings as the pictorial shorthand of the oracular procedure. See, for instance, Fontenrose 1978: 205, fig. 2. Cf. also below n.118 on instances in the *Ion* where Euripides seems to be borrowing from the vocabulary of visual arts.

Ion's monody enables the audience to localize the dramatic action within the atmosphere of purity and light.[43] The dazzling effect of light is illustrated by the repetition of the words λαμπρά (82), λάμπει (83), καταλαμπόμεναι (87)—all words with the root meaning 'bright'—for Parnassus' mountain peaks, and ἀργυροειδεῖς (95) for the silvery gleam of the Kastalian waters. The gleaming sunlight is again reflected on the 'gold-covered' Delphic temple (χρυσήρεις, 157) and the 'golden' vessels (χρυσέων, 146). Purity and light are repeatedly associated in the monody: 'the untrodden peaks . . . are bright' (ἄβατοι κορυφαί/καταλαμπόμεναι, 86–7), and the 'silvery streams' of Kastalia are also 'pure waters' (ἀργυροειδεῖς . . . /δίνας, καθαραῖς δὲ δρόσοις, 95–96). A similar effect is achieved by Ion's order to his attendants to cleanse themselves in the Kastalian spring before approaching the oracle and to abstain from uttering ill-omened words (94–101). This ritual εὐφημία command (98–101), which is an injunction to keep solemn silence during religious rites, and, when allowed, to speak only well-omened words, not only associates Apollo's oracle with purity and auspicious words, but also aptly characterizes Ion—his concern for purity at any cost is a recurrent theme in the monody.[44]

The monody also serves as an introduction of the protagonist of the play. Ion's role as temple-servant is not confined to the wielding of a broom. He purifies the precinct with water poured from gold ewers (an authentic touch).[45] He also looks after the temple treasures (χρυσοφύλακα, 'keeper of the gold', 54), a hint at the extraordinary wealth of the sanctuary, the pillaging of whose dedications enable the Phokians in the middle of the fourth century to pay for an entire army for several years. The future mythical ruler of Athens and founder of the Ionian race is here the treasurer of the Delphic

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[43] Hermes, in the closing lines of his prologue, employs the epithet λαμπρά, 'bright' (79) to Ion's imminent brightening up of the god's portals with laurel branches. The same adjective is echoed on the first line of Ion's monody where it describes the brightness of the Sun's chariot.

[44] See Hoffer 1996: 291–95 on ritual silence (he oddly replaces the Greek word 'euphemia' for 'euphemism', p. 291; cf. correct use of euphemism on pp. 294 and 299 n. 28) and the violent undertones of the Delphic purity described by Ion in his monody.

[45] For gold and purification see Parker 1983: 212 n. 18, and see now the *lex sacra* from Selinus: Jameson 1993, line B11. On the glossing over of images of violence with gold in the *Ion*, see Thorburn 2000.

riches, much like imperial Athens, capitalizing on their victory in the Persian wars, becomes the guardian of the treasury of the Delian League which is moved from Delos to Athens in c. 454/3 BC.

Parodos (184–236)

The Delphic setting remains the focus of attention throughout the entrance song of the chorus. Kreousa's Athenian attendants arrive ahead of their mistress and occupy themselves with sight-seeing at the Delphic sanctuary.[46] From the entrance into the precinct, a real-life visitor would certainly have noticed the existence of the temple, probably only partly discerned from the steep path leading to the sanctuary, through the openings between the various sacred buildings of the precinct. By the second curve of the sacred path, such a visitor would turn left to face the eastern façade of the temple of Apollo with an altar standing before its entrance. So too the chorus, entering from the left side-entrance,[47] face the eastern façade of the Delphic temple with its altar at the middle of the orchestra,[48]

[46] The attendants of Neoptolemos spent three days admiring the treasuries of the Delphic precinct, before carrying out their business with the Delphic oracle in Eur. *Andr.* 1085–87. Euripides employs the sight-seeing motif also in *IA* 164–302, where the chorus in their entrance song give a long description of the Greek naval force, and in fr. 764 N² from the *Hypsipyle*, where the two interlocutors seem to admire the palace façade at Nemea. We may also compare the Aeschylean satyr play *Theoroi* or *Isthmiastai* (P. Oxy. 2162; fr. 78a *TGrF*), where the chorus act as spectators of the Isthmian games; Theocr. *Idyll* xv 80–86, where two women admire the tapestries; and, Herodas *Mime* 4, where two women at the temple of Asklepios admire the lifelikeness of its sculptures and paintings. The interesting variation in the *Ion* is that the chorus notice only those details that relate to their knowledge of Athenian art.

[47] In this play, one of the side-entrances leads to the area north of the temple, to Parnassus, the Phaedriades, and the Kastalian spring, while the other side-entrance leads south towards the valley, the city of Delphi, the Trophonius' oracle and Athens. Ion must have entered from the right to greet the sunrise in the left of the theatre of Dionysus (this may assume a performance at dawn), which would imply that the chorus, Kreousa and Xouthos enter from the left; more cautiously, see Hourmouziades 1965: 134–35.

[48] There was certainly one altar in the *Ion*, and in my view no more than one. The suppliant scene at 1255ff., when Kreousa seeks refuge at an altar to avoid punishment from Ion, warrants the use of an altar; see Lee on 1255–6. The numerous instances of words such as θυμέλη (46, 114, 161, 226–28), βωμός (52, 323, 422, 1255, 1275, 1280, 1306, 1314, 1401, 1403) and πυρά (1258) to refer to altars in the sacred precinct of the Delphic temple, has led some scholars to argue for the use of a second stage altar for the staging of the *Ion*; see Arnott, 1962: 44–45 on the existence of a fixed orchestra altar dedicated to Dionysus and a separate property altar placed on the stage (p. 48 on a stage altar for the *Ion*). Another view by Winnington-Ingram, 1976: 497–99, holds that the supplication scene took place

and marvel at its beauty, using a vocabulary with a strong Athenian flavour. The playwright creates a verbal construct of Delphi by drawing on readily available literary, pictorial and mythical sources; he picks details from different sides of the pedimental sculptures and metopes of the Delphic temple, thus imposing a pattern of his own which stands in a closer relation to Athenian iconography and, hence, to the kind of artistic lore which would be most familiar to the chorus and of course to his audience as well.

There is little doubt that the chorus describe not the eastern pediment of the temple, which they ought to have seen upon entering the orchestra, but instead the Gigantomachy, which seems to have been the subject of the western pediment of the Alcmaeonid temple.[49] And they recognize only three scenes from the Gigantomachy (κλόνον ... Γιγάντων, 'the rout of the giants', 206–7), in which three gods, Athena, Zeus, and Dionysus, defeat their respective enemies Enkelados, Mimas, and an anonymous Giant (209–18). Yet this is by no means an exhaustive account of the pedimental figures, nor is it at all an accurate one. In fact the precise angle and distance between the figures now identified as Athena and Enkelados makes it impossible for these two to have been part of the same scene; and, on the western pediment there also seem to have been depicted one chariot and three more divine figures which are completely

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inside the temple, in the *pronaus*, but outside the inner sanctuary, the *adyton*, where the altar would be placed; adopted by Wiles 1997: 80. But, this claim fails to acknowledge the dramatic importance of having Kreousa remain outside the temple throughout the course of the play, so as to stage in physical terms her clash with Apollo. She moves away from the altar at 1401, when she recognizes Ion's birth tokens; and at 1609–13, her change of heart is dramatically expressed by the clasping of the ring on the temple door. Poe 1989 is the better view, that evidence points towards the use of a single orchestra altar. The acoustics of the theatre would have made it desirable for the actors and their audience to be as close as possible to each other and to the centre of the orchestra where their voices would have been the more audible; see Hunningher 1956, and Canac 1967. The action of the *Ion* would have concentrated in the area around the orchestra altar and on the line leading from the centre of the orchestra to the temple door. For general arguments that in Greek tragedy the centre of the orchestra, including an altar if there was one, was the focal point of the performance, see Ley & Ewans 1985: 75–84, esp. n. 8; Rehm 1988: 274, 282 nn. 82–3, 307 and 1994: 34–6, n. 12; Wiles 1997: 63–86.

[49] That Euripides in the *Ion* is envisaging the temple built by the Athenian Alkmaionid family (513–505 BC, Hdt. 5.62.2–3) is now generally accepted; see Coste-Messelière 1931: 26–27. On the pedimental sculptures of the Delphic temple, and esp. on the claim that the Gigantomachy was depicted on the western pediment, see Homolle 1902: 588–95, 1901: 513–14; Coste-Messelière 1931: 15–32; Yoshida 1966: 5; Koster 1976: 378.

ignored by the chorus.[50] Furthermore, the chorus describe two more individual scenes, each comprising three figures, which bear no relation to the Gigantomachy at all: the first one portrays Heracles slaying the Lernean Hydra with Iolaos rushing to his aid (190–200), the second shows Bellerophon riding on Pegasus and slaying the Chimaira (201–4).[51] The search for the exact location of these scenes has been inconclusive, but it seems beyond doubt that they did not form a part of the pedimental sculptures.[52]

Euripides captures the chorus in the act of viewing and offers this spectacle to his audience, inviting them to witness the impact that the grandeur of the Delphic temple has on first-time visitors.[53] The view offered in this entrance song of the chorus is complementary to the representation of the sanctuary in the prologue, which conveyed a vision of the everyday hustle and bustle of the religious centre moments before the arrival of visitors. The chorus' gaze is that of tourists eager to store in their memory, by a kind of inner visual stenography, the temple's elaborate decoration—itself a marker of the importance of the oracular shrine—as a souvenir of their visit to Delphi. The chorus translate from art into poetry and theatrical representation, from image into narrative and spectacle. By reading and relating the images to each other they best illustrate the words of Simonides the Keian (c. 556–467 BC) that painting is silent poetry and poetry a speaking picture (τὴν μὲν ζωγραφίαν ποίησιν σιωπῶσαν ... τὴν δὲ ποίησιν ζωγραφίαν λαλοῦσαν, Plut. *Mor.* 346–47). The specta-

[50] For a well argued discussion of the inconsistencies and omissions in the Euripidean description, see Koster 1976: 374–79, who concludes: 'Euripide aurait imaginé une Gigantomachie quelconque, répondant à l'impression générale qu' en avaient les spectateurs', 'Euripides would have envisioned a certain Gigantomachy corresponding to the spectators' general impressions' (p. 377).

[51] Note that the second group is not identified by name by the chorus, but would have easily been identified by the audience. Bellerophon on Pegasus attacking the Chimaira was found in Athenian vase-painting before the end of the seventh century BC (Brommer 1960: 220–21), and Euripides himself wrote a *Bellerophon* (cf. also *Stheneboia*) not to mention the celebrated treatment of the theme in the *Thirteenth Olympian Ode* of Pindar. See Lee on 201–4.

[52] Koster 1976: 379 n. 48, follows Homolle and Wilamowitz in attributing these scenes to the metopes; so too Rosivach 1977: 284. But Zeitlin 1994: 148–49 n. 28 finds no evidence that these scenes belong to this specific site.

[53] Note the frequency with which words of seeing occur, often paired with adverbs of place and demonstrative pronouns: ἰδού, τᾶιδ᾽ ἄθρησον (190); πρόσιδ᾽ ὅσσοις (193); ὁρῶ (194); τόνδἀ ἄθρησον (201); πάνται τοι βλέφαρον διώκω (205; cf. καλλιβλέφαρον 189); σκέψαι (206); †ῷδε δερκόμεθα† (208); λεύσσεις (209); λεύσσω (211); ὁρῶ (214).

tors, in turn, translate poetry and theatrical representation into mental picture.[54]

The chorus' song is an interesting example of a rendition of art. When they are confronted with the sculptural decoration on the pediment, their stock of cultural memories, including art and song, is recalled and tested against what they see.[55] The result is not a meticulous description of the totality of the sculptured figures, but just the labelling of a selection of scenes familiar from Athenian iconography. The chorus' viewing seems to have reached its goal in this simple identification of some of the depicted figures by means of the successful recognition of their conventional attributes, such as Athena's shield, Zeus' thunderbolt and Dionysus' ivy wand.[56] There is no effort here to appreciate the quality of craftsmanship or the aesthetic value of the artifact, or to reach a more profound understanding of the relationship between the individual panels; other visual aspects such as colour,[57] light, form, design are details left unrecorded by the chorus.

The captioning of a pictorial representation or the denomination of the individual figures is a consistent feature in ekphrastic literature; it is the 'speaking out' (*ek-phrasis*) of silent art, a release of the narrative compressed in mute painting. This tendency is paralleled in Greek art, where, after the introduction of the Phoenician alphabet in the eighth century BC, inscriptions were often added supplying the names of the depicted figures. In Delphi itself we now know that the figures on the north and east frieze of the treasury house of the Siphnians were identified by name in large and easily legible

[54] For an invaluable discussion of the Greek and Latin sources on 'mnemotechnics', the contribution of images to the enhancement of memory, and the theory of the equation of poetry and painting, see Yates 1966: 1–49.

[55] Cf. how Ion's knowledge of the Athenian myths comes from their visual representations in art (ὥσπερ ἐν γραφῆι νομίζεται, 'as is regularly depicted', 271) and from the oral tradition (ὡς μεμύθευται, 'as the story goes', 265; λόγος, 'the tale', 275). See also below pp. 35–6 and n. 118.

[56] Statues of the gods are also identified by the chorus by means of their customary emblems in Aesch. *Suppl.* 206–7; Zeus with his bird (212), Apollo, Poseidon with his trident (218–19, though the name of the god is not spelled out), Hermes (219–20, probably with his herald's staff; note ἐσθλὰ κηρυκευέτω, 'may he be a good herald', 220). Cf. also Aesch. *Septem* 95–180, where the chorus pray to the βρέτη, 'wooden images', of the gods Ares, Zeus, Athena, Poseidon, Aphrodite, Apollo, Hera, Artemis invoked with their attributes.

[57] With the exception of χρυσέαις ἅρπαις, 'with a golden sickle', 192, on which see Thorburn 2000: 43–4.

inscriptions.[58] Similar tactics are encountered in sepulchral epigrams, which identified and commemorated the dead.[59] Greek vase-painters went further than the simple denomination of the represented figures and attempted by the insertion of inscriptions to break away from pictorial stasis, animate their art, but also guide the viewer's gaze into reading the picture. To this effect inscriptions were placed no longer just above or below the represented figures but often along their side, in the direction of the depicted action. And, by around 520 BC, the represented figures themselves were shown in the act of dialogue with spoken words literally coming out of their mouths.[60] This short-lived tendency appeared around the time of the invention of theatrical dialogue—a case of art imitating theatre. The introduction of perspective painting after 450 BC, eliminated writing to conform with the new conception of space as a continuous whole that could no longer be interrupted by the insertion of inscriptions.[61]

In the parodos of the *Ion*, the chorus supply the sort of information one would find in an inscription, an epigram or a picture title. It is a case of dramatic representation borrowing from and adapting pictorial practice to aid the identification and classification of new information. The language is plain with few and merely descriptive adjectives. Yet even this unimpressive deciphering of the artifacts has not been an invariably smooth process. The chorus' socially constructed codes of recognition bear the mark of their Athenian origin and daily occupation. They immediately relate the Delphic temple to Athenian buildings (184–89)[62] and one of the individual panels to a myth they have represented in their own weaving (ἐμαῖσι μυθεύεται παρὰ πήναις, 196–200).[63] One scene poses problems of identification by name to the chorus (201–4); this difficulty con-

[58] Simon 1984; Brinkmann 1985.

[59] On the association between *ekphrasis* and sepulchral inscriptions, see Heffernan 1991: 302–3. Cf. also Svenbro 1993.

[60] On the inscriptional evidence on Greek vase-paintings, see Lissarrague 1992.

[61] On perspective painting, see Padel 1990: esp. 346–54.

[62] Cf. also how they identify Athena as ἐμὰν θεόν, 'my goddess' (211). Note that the construction οὐκ ... μόνον (184) ... ἀλλὰ καί (188) 'not only ... but also' has a double function: it both brings out the association with Athens and acts as a simple priamel focusing-device highlighting the description of Delphi that follows; cf. Hes. *WD* 11–2; Theocr. xiii 1–2; Timocreon fr. 3/719.

[63] Here the reference is probably to the ritual of weaving an ornate robe (*peplos*) for Athena and presenting it to her at the festival of Panathenaia in order to express the city's gratitude for Athena's role in the Gigantomachy and the saving of the city. On the possibility of the offering of two *peploi* to Athena, one every

tributes to the naturalism of the dramatic scene and enhances the characterization of the chorus as unsophisticated sightseers. Deficiencies in the interpretation of an artifact have been a common *topos* in ekphrastic literature.[64] Such incomplete readings of the artifacts raise the general question of the precarious relationship between the viewer and the object.[65]

The whole interpretation of the pedimental sculptures leaves much to be desired. The chorus merely list the scenes in paratactic order and do not analyze the rules which govern the juxtaposition of the pictorial triptych of the Gigantomachy with the other two scenes, so that they never arrive at the meaning of the whole composition. The responsibility for reaching beneath the paratactic layer of the chorus' description and deciphering its message is left to the audience. It is the spectators, privileged with the knowledge of Apollo's intentions as reported in Hermes' prologue, who need to deduce the central theme to which the individual panels are subordinate. The pediment contains a more general message concerning the universal order imposed by the gods and heroes, in anticipation of the outcome of the dramatic plot, and a secondary message about the taming of primitive chthonian forces and violent tendencies, probably an admonition to Kreousa and a foreshadowing of the containment of the assassination plot.[66]

The dramatic gestures and movements of the chorus facilitated the audience's task of decoding the ekphrasis. If there was choreographic identity between strophe and antistrophe,[67] then the thematic relevance of the different scenes on the Delphic pediment would

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year by young women and girls and one every four years by professional men, see Mansfield 1985 with Barber 1992: 112–17.

[64] Cf. Virgil's third *Eclogue*, where the shepherd Menalcas, in his description of the carving on two wooden cups, cannot recall the name of one of the two engraved astronomers; see Hollander, 1988: 210–11.

[65] For the exploitation of this *topos* in painting, see Poussin's *Arcadian Shepherds*, where a group of Arcadians strive to make sense of the words '*et in Arcadia ego*' inscribed upon a tombstone. See also its re-working by Reynolds in the Portrait of *Mrs Bouverie and Mrs Crewe*, which depicts two ladies pondering upon the meaning of the same sepulchral inscription. Beard & Henderson 1995: 113–21 interpret the phrase as particularly inviting to subjective readings ('a motto for [one] to complete and situate in relation to [oneself]', p. 121). The correct and original meaning of the phrase is 'I, Death, am to be found even in Arcadia'; see the classic discussion of Panofsky 1970: 340–67.

[66] See discussions in Wolff 1965, Mueller 1975, Mastronarde 1975, Rosivach 1977, Zeiltlin 1994; Lee on 184–236.

[67] So Wiles 1997: 97–103.

have been brought out more clearly. Then, the gestures accompanying the description of the last scene of the gigantomachy at the end of the second strophe, in which Dionysus is described as killing a chthonian monster with his ivy wand, must also apply to the announcement of Kreousa's entrance at the end of the second antistrophe. Similarly, the slaying of the Hydra and Chimaira, the children of Echidna, at the end of the first strophe and antistrophe respectively, must be accompanied by the same set of gestures, which may also have applied to the climax of all the strophes and antistrophes.[68] In the end, despite their largely inadequate treatment of the Delphic sculptures, the chorus in their entrance song and dance offer a preview of some of the most fundamental issues of the play, though they themselves remain quite unaware of the wider implications of their words and movements. The chthonic ancestry of the Athenian queen and her association with serpents,[69] and the Dionysiac element, strongly invoked in the course of the play,[70] are all insinuated in the parodos.

First Episode (237–451)

The Athenian maidens present the Delphic sanctuary from the standpoint of the outsiders. But rather than offer an alternative to Ion's idyllic picture of the locale in his monody, the chorus share Ion's idealized image of Delphi, the oracle, and its divine sponsor, and have an equally idealized/naïve image of Athens itself. It is with the introduction of Athens in the person of the suffering Kreousa that

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[68] Wiles 1997: 103. Note that later, at 1261–65, Ion assimilates Kreousa to a bull, a viper (echidna) and a serpent and equates her evil nature with the poisonous blood of the Gorgon; see Rosivach 1977: 285ff.; Hoffer 1996: 300–1.

[69] Kreousa herself will shortly recount for Ion her chthonic descent from Erechtheus (267–70). Later, she employs the deadly drop of blood taken from the chthonian Gorgon's snakes in her attempt to kill Ion (1015); and, the recognition tokens she had placed in Ion's cradle are strong reminders of her association with the Gorgon and the serpents (1421–23). Scholars have often stressed this association and also the darker side of autochthony Kreousa personifies; see Burnett 1970: 144–46; Immerwahr 1972: 285–6; Loraux 1993: esp. 222–24; Mastronarde explores the association of Giants, serpents and autochthony (1975: 164–65; 168); Giraud examines the significance of the bird-motif as a stand-in for the Olympians, Apollo and Delphi, and as the counterpart of the snake-motif typically associated with autochthony, Kreousa and Athens (1987: 83–4). See also below ch. 2

[70] During the false recognition scene, Ion concludes that he must have been conceived during a Dionysiac festival (550–54); the chorus invoke Dionysus twice in a ritual context (714–17; 1074–86); Kreousa attempts to kill Ion during the course of a Dionysiac feast. On the Dionysiac associations in the *Ion*, see Zeitlin 1996: 300–4; Pozzi 1991: 135–44 and below n. 102 and ch. 3.2., n. 26.

this idyllic image of Delphi comes to be challenged. While visitors to the temple are usually joyful (245), with reactions similar to the chorus' utter delight at the external beauty of the temple (232), Kreousa closes her eyes at the sight of the oracle of Apollo and tears roll down her cheeks (241–42; 246). The Athenian queen is immersed in her past memories and her mind remains still at Athens, though she is physically present at Delphi (250–51). Kreousa is bound up with her own Athenian space in relation to which Ion is considered a foreigner, hence she addresses him as ξένε ('stranger' 247), whereas only a few moments ago it was Ion who called the women of the chorus ξέναι (222), for they were the visitors to his Delphic space. Again, when Ion questions Kreousa about the Athenian legends he is the ξένος (264, 266, 312, 360) but when Kreousa accuses Apollo for his intimate relations with one of her friends, she becomes an intruder into Ion's space and is addressed as ξένη (339; 429).[71] The manner of address is indicative both of the initial distance between mother and son at this very first contact, but also of the relationship of each character with respect to Delphi and Athens, the two dramatic settings of the play.

In the ensuing stichomythia Kreousa's identity is established together with her family history, which coincides with the origins of the Athenian autochthonous race. The mythical emergence of Erichthonios straight from the earth (267–68) and the story of how Athena entrusted him to the Kekropids (269–72) who disobeyed the goddess' order, opened the basket which contained the child, and hurled themselves from the rock (273–74) are all confirmed by Kreousa. So too is the story of Erechtheus who sacrificed his daughters (except for Kreousa, who being still a baby was saved in her mother's arms, 277–80) and was subsequently swallowed by the gaping earth where it was struck by Poseidon's trident in a place called Μακραί, 'the Long Rocks' (281–83), associated with the worship of Pythian Apollo at Athens (285). The off-stage area is extended to include the Acropolis and its surroundings where these legendary events took place in the distant past. It is in the same location that is found the cave where Apollo violated Kreousa (10–13; 288; 493–94; 936–37; 1400; 1478–84) and where she subsequently exposed her illegitimate child (16–18; 503–6; 899; 1398–1400).

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[71] On the frequency of such formalities between characters preceding their recognition with each other, see Lee on 238. Cf. 1221 with Lee, on Kreousa as

The introduction of the Athenians' legendary past in the form of the myths of Erichthonios and the Kekropids, and the fates of Kreousa's father, Erechtheus, and her sisters would inevitably have evoked the sacred locations and buildings of the Acropolis associated with the commemoration of these Athenian ancestors,[72] i.e. the adjacent physical context of the theatre of Dionysus in which the *Ion* was itself performed. The repeated references to and careful demarcation of the location where the violation of Kreousa by Apollo occurred, are similar pointers for the audience. Athens is henceforth to be imagined as an elsewhere to which constant reference is to be made in an effort to interpret the course of events in the dramatic here and now. The audience are to imagine Delphi as the primary setting of the dramatic action and make the Athenian Acropolis in the vicinity of the theatre of Dionysus recede to the time of its foundation myth; to make what is near (Acropolis) far (in the dramatic past) and what is far (Delphi) near (in the dramatic present).[73]

First Choral Ode (452–509)

So far the Athenian and the Delphic settings have appeared in shifting perspectives, running along parallel lines in the minds of the dramatic characters and the viewers. Hermes introduced the present dramatic setting through the key Athenian setting of the 'Long Rocks' in the prehistory of the drama. And, as much as Ion identified himself through his life in Delphi, Kreousa introduced herself through her memories of Athens. In the parodos, the chorus focused on the similarities between the Athenian and Delphic settings, overlooking any existing disparities. In the first choral ode, the chorus are the first to report the association of the cave of Pan, adjoining the 'Long Rocks' below the Acropolis, with the rape of Kreousa's alleged friend by Apollo (492–508). And this reference to Pan's cave is all the more striking since it follows the chorus' prayer to Athena to grant offspring to the Athenian royal couple.[74] The wild scenery of Pan's cave in

'the foreign woman' behind the assassination plot. For the changes in the manner of address, see Lee on 339 (also 520 on Xouthos); Zacharia 1999: 353.

[72] Especially if Connelly is right and the Parthenon 'was considered to rest atop the tomb of the virgins, the *parthenoi* [the Kekropids], just as the tomb of Erechtheus may have been believed to rest under part of the Erechtheion' (1996: 76).

[73] Loraux 1993: 195–98.

[74] For the effectiveness of change of theme and setting in the same choral ode, see Eur. *Med.* 824–65, where the chorus, after the appearance of Aigeus, sing of Athens in the first strophic pair but go on to criticize Medea's abominable plan in the second. On the meaning of Pan's cave in the *Ion*, see Zacharia 1995: 52.

the epode is set apart from the Delphic oracle in the strophe: the former is the setting for the exposure and death of the child of a forced union (500–6), while the latter bears the hope of the Athenian royal line for the birth of a child (458–71).[75]

II. *Delphi and Athens in conflict (510–1249)*

Second Episode (510–675)

In the second episode, after the false recognition scene which explores the possibility that a Delphian maiden might have given birth to Ion (550–55), Ion's short-lived joy at finding his father gives way to reason and he recalls possible consequences of his arrival as Xouthos' heir in the autochthonous city-state of Athens. Ion delivers a long rhesis (585–647) in which, through a detailed contrast between his possible future life in Athens and his life at Delphi, he laboriously tries to prove that the latter is superior.[76] Although he stands on the threshold between Athens and Delphi, he does not want to cross it, for he prefers to stay where he is, secure in the seclusion of the Delphic temple, away from public life and the responsibilities of adulthood.

In his long speech, Ion contemplates a wrench from sanctuary to *polis*. The quiet Delphian shrinks from the status of politically involved Athenian. At a point in the action when he falsely believes that he knows his father's identity but correctly believes that he himself faces a move to Athens, he expresses his anxieties at this imminent transition, in a speech which sets out the disadvantages of civic life. Or rather he sets out his own disqualifications (as he sees them) for such a life, and for the quest for political power, the limiting case of which is tyranny. This important *nolo episcopari* speech should not be amputated in whole or part.[77] It belongs at the end of a classic line of

[75] In the antistrophe, the lasting happiness and light brought by children to the family is stressed: ὑπερβαλλούσας . . . εὐδαιμονίας ἀκίνητον ἀφορμάν ('a secure fund of exceeding happiness', 472–74) and λάμπωσιν ἐν θαλάμοις πατρίοισι νεάνιδες ἧβαι ('vigorous youth shines bright in one's ancestral halls', 476–77). By contrast, in the epode there is darkness and unhappiness: Pan plays his pipes in his sunless cave (ἀναλίοις . . . τοῖσι σοῖς ἐν ἄντροις, 500–2) where the unhappy woman (παρθένος μελέα, 503) exposes her child to die.

[76] Yet the play itself both 'idealizes and undercuts the sanctity of Delphi', Hoffer 1996: 316; cf. also Dunn 2000: 23–7, on 'mystification ironized' in the *Ion*.

[77] For the latest attempt at excision of the crucial 'tyranny' section 621–31, see

such quietist or anti-political expressions in poetic texts, running from Archilochus, through the *Third Pythian Ode* of Pindar, to Euripides' own *Hippolytus* of 429/8 BC.[78] To make his point, the quiet Delphian borrows some of the vocabulary and argumentation of the 'quiet Athenians', as they have been called, those fastidious or frightened individuals who avoided political involvement and for whose attitudes much of the evidence consists of texts in prose.[79]

Ion was right to think that he could not both be a temple servant and a member of a polis, even the polis of 'the Delphians': when Kreousa asks him 'do you live in this temple or under the roof [of a house]?' he answers firmly that he lives in the temple precinct (314–15). Still less can he be simultaneously a temple servant and a permanently participating member of the polis of Athens: hence the wrench. It has often been noticed that Ion, in the course of the play, makes a transition from 'sheltered innocence to engagement in brutal action', rather like Antigone in Euripides' nearly-contemporary *Phoinissai* (409? BC).[80] It would be tempting to see in this human development a microcosm of a larger historical process, the historical development from the early world of sanctuaries and amphictionies to the sophisticated classical system of the Greek polis. On that view the development from Ion the Delphian temple-servant to Ion the Athenian ruler would stand for the historical development from sanctuary to polis. That would however be too simple, for various reasons. First, because Delphi is itself a polis as well as a sanctuary, as we have seen. Second, because sanctuaries and poleis interacted from earliest times.[81] It may be too strong to say that all Greek religion was polis religion,[82] but there was a strong polis aspect even to the greatest of the panhellenic sanctuaries, Delphi and Olym-

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Alt 1998, oddly claiming that nobody has hitherto suspected these lines. On the contrary, see Kovacs 1979.

[78] Young 1968, ch. 1 convincingly locates Pind. *Pyth.* 3.105ff. in this tradition; *Ion* 621ff. is central to his comparatist thesis. Euripides also handled this theme (rejection of the life of active involvement) in fragmentary plays, such as *Antiope* (drawn on by Plato in *Gorgias*) and perhaps *Phaethon*.

[79] Carter 1986.

[80] Mastronarde 1994: 6 n. 1. For Ion's 'transitional' status in the technical ephebic sense see below ch. 3.4.

[81] Morgan 1990.

[82] Sourvinou-Inwood 1990. But allowance has to be made for private and therefore badly-documented religion, and for federal religion, a topic which does not concern us here, but see Parker 1997.

pia, though this was less obviously true of amphiktionic Delphi than of Olympia which was under the direct control of the polis of Elis.

The dramatic consequence of Ion's speech at this point of the play is the formation of a breach in the imaginary bond between the two dramatic settings which was carefully laid out for the audience in the preceding action. The numerous future tenses in Xouthos' answer (655, 656, 659, 665) signal his eagerness to abandon the Delphic setting forever and to return to the land of Athens with his newly-found son.[83] There Xouthos expects to find happiness.[84] Ion's reluctant obedience is expressed by a series of conditional phrases (669, 670, 673).[85] Meanwhile, the chorus' discontent with Xouthos' good fortune is gradually turning to resentment, paving the way for their eventual disobedience. When the interests of Xouthos and his newly-found son, on the one hand, and those of Kreousa and the Erechtheid palace, on the other, split apart, the chorus start to clarify their position, more and more openly siding with Kreousa. After witnessing the recognition between father and son, the chorus' reservations become apparent in their wish that Kreousa and the house of Erechtheus could also be blessed with children (566–68; cf. 469–70). Again later, they approve of Ion's speech, on condition that it results in the happiness of their mistress (648–49). The chorus' constant preoccupation with their mistress's fortune, prepares the ground for their outright condemnation of Xouthos' chosen course of action (705) and their prayer for Ion's death in the following choral ode.

Second Choral Ode (676–724)

In their second ode, the chorus look to the future and anticipate disaster (676–80). The feelings to which they give voice and the vocabulary they employ continue to suggest an imaginary progression towards the locale of Athens. In the epode, they address a prayer to the peaks of Parnassus wishing for Ion's death before he ever reaches Athens as a foreign intruder (714–20). At the end of the

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[83] Note the verbs of movement: ἄγων, 'taking you', 654; τῆς δ' Ἀθηναίων χθονὸς ἄξω θεατήν, 'I shall take you with me as a sightseer of the Athenian land', 656; μέλλων Δελφίδ' ἐκλιπεῖν πόλιν, 'you are going to leave the city of Delphi', 665.

[84] It is recurrently emphasized that one of Xouthos' supposed main motives in acting as he does is to live in happiness; see 650, 658, 699. The result of such a preoccupation, we are constantly reminded, is that he does not share a common fate with his wife; see 699, 702–4, 817–18.

[85] See Lattimore quoted by Lee on 668.

ode, their imaginary journey to the city of Athens (cf. ἐμὰν πόλιν, 'my city', 719) in the future time of Ion's intrusion into the Erechtheid palace is paralleled by another such journey to the past time of Erechtheus' mythical reign in Athens (721ff.). The chorus carry the spectators along this imaginary trajectory into the dramatic future through the mythical past. The ode closes with the name of Erechtheus (724) not just as a statement of their 'loyalty to the legitimate line',[86] but also because they may have just recognized the old tutor entering the stage. The lacunose text here calls for speculation.[87] Another interpretation detects 'a likely correlation between Ion's entry into Athens as a "foreign invasion" and Erechtheus' situation with regard to the war on behalf of Athens against Eleusis'.[88] The two interpretations could be combined into a third one: the chorus women recall Erechtheus' victory over the Eleusinian assailants at this point that the autochthonous line of the Athenian race is again in danger from foreign invasion and perhaps wish for another Athenian victory by the successful elimination of the new foreign invader, Ion.

Third Episode (725–1047)

In the first line of the third episode, Kreousa picks up the cue of Erechtheus' name, which is still ringing in the spectators' ears from the closing line of the second ode. She employs her father's name in her address to the old tutor (725). This is not accidental. In her first utterance in three hundred lines, the Athenian queen mentions her father three times in ten lines (725, 733, 734) ending both the first line and the closing line with the word πατρός ('[my] father'). One can even detect ring-composition in this brief introduction of the old tutor: the last two lines echo the first pair of lines (725–26; 733–34). In both instances the somewhat complicated structure results in the creation of a strong mental association (or fusion) between the figures of the old man and Erechtheus. The old tutor will henceforth serve as a surrogate for Erechtheus. But if the old tutor is a dramatic proxy for Erechtheus, it may be helpful to recapitulate the information we have been given so far about Erechtheus, so that we may comprehend better what the role of the old tutor is supposed

[86] Burnett on 721; see Lee on 724.

[87] See Diggle's suggested reconstruction at 722–24 with Lee on 721ff.

[88] Zeitlin 1996: 320–22 and n. 56. This idea is in line with her general interpretation of the play as loaded with ritual allusions to the mysteries of Eleusis.

to be. Erechtheus, as a descendant of Erichthonios, was himself also earthborn; he sacrificed his daughters for his country's sake (277–78), sparing only Kreousa for being a baby in her mother's arms (279–80); he defended Athens against the foreign invasion (721–24); he perished by the stroke of Poseidon's trident near the Long Rocks, where Kreousa was raped by Apollo (281–82).[89]

The old man comes forth to lend Kreousa moral support (727–32), since her father is dead and he, whom 'she honours as a father'[90] (734), is the next best substitute. The old tutor of Erechtheus will now act as the guardian of the Athenian autochthonous royal line.[91] His appearance revives the history of the Athenian royal family. His role in this episode is to ensure that Kreousa remains worthy of her ancestors (cf. 735–37) and that Xouthos' plan to introduce Ion in the house of the Erechtheids (653–56) and eventually make him successor to the throne (659–60) fails. His motives are similar to those of Erechtheus' when he saved the city from the foreign invader, king Eumolpus of Eleusis (cf. 721–24). Erechtheus had to sacrifice his daughters (277–78) to secure victory. The old man will soon attempt, in alliance with Kreousa,[92] to eliminate Ion in order to safeguard the purity of the Athenian royal line and defend the Erechtheid palace against foreign intrusion (cf. 808–11).

When Kreousa hears from the chorus that she will bear no children (760–62),[93] she is deeply upset. At the news that her husband

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[89] On Erechtheus, see 10, 260, 277, 433, 469, 546, 568, 724, 725, 810, 1106, 1220, 1293, 1465, 1573; on the Erechtheids, see 24, 1056, 1060. Of all these references, the only useful information about Erechtheus himself comes from 277–82. See below ch. 2.3.2, pp. 63–4.

[90] See Lee on 733–4. Perhaps the two translations Owen supplies as alternatives, 'I care for you in my father's place' and 'I care for you as my father did', are both connoted here. Kreousa is about to help the old man climb up the steep path that leads to the temple, even though she has the high rank of a δέσποινα, 'mistress' (734). And the phrase παιδαγώγ' . . . πατρός, 'tutor of my father' (725) is echoed in ἀντικηδεύω πατρός, 'I tend you like (i.e. as if you were) my father' (734). Moreover, the chorus' last words, before their first visual contact with the old tutor, were Ἐρεχθεὺς ἄναξ, 'King Erechtheus' (724), whereas the old man addresses Kreousa as θύγατερ, 'daughter' (735). Cf. also 763, 925, 942, 970, 998.

[91] On the old tutor's role, see Walsh 1978: 302–8; Saxonhouse 1986: 268–69.

[92] For Kreousa as the guardian of the hearth of Erechtheus, see Loraux 1993: 208–9 and n. 105.

[93] On the chorus' misinterpretation of the oracle, see Lee on 761–2. The childlessness of Kreousa was an assumption that Ion makes emphatically in his long speech: he calls her 'childless' repeatedly (608, 613, 619) and assumes that she will grow old without children (ἄπαιδα γηράσκουσαν, 619); he concludes that this is an

was granted a son (774–75; 780; 789), she collapses under the strain and wishes she could fly away from Greece to the western stars (796–99), as if to break away from the confining circle of Athens and Delphi and be delivered from pain.[94] When, sixty lines later, she finally bursts into a monody (859–922), she releases all her pent-up pain and concludes her attack on Apollo by projecting her hatred for the god onto Delos, his birthplace (919).[95]

In the ensuing dialogue, Kreousa, urged on by the old man's fervent defense of the rights of the Athenian royal line, conceives a cunning and effective plan (985) to take vengeance for the injustices her divine and mortal lovers had inflicted on her. Fortunately, she happens to have some poison on her, which she carries on her wrist: κἀπὶ καρπῶι . . . ἐγὼ χερὸς φέρω (1009; contrast her innocent white wrist at 891). The source of this poison is another piece of Athenian mythology: it came from the blood of the Gorgon who was created by *Ge* to help her sons in the battle of the gods but was killed by Athena (987–91). Pallas gave two drops of the Gorgon's blood to Erichthonios at his birth (1001–3), one beneficent from the hollow vein of the dying Gorgon, and one deadly from the venom of the Gorgon's snakes, kept separately, of course (1011–17). Erichthonios, in turn, gave it to Erechtheus, from whom Kreousa inherited it (1007–9). Kreousa suggests that the plan to execute Ion be carried out in Athens, but the old tutor votes for immediate action at Delphi (1020–28). The Athenian queen agrees, but by taking this decision (on strictly rational grounds), the spectators may note that the two accomplices alter Apollo's plans as described by Hermes in the prologue (71–3).[96] By the end of this scene, the old tutor sets out to

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undeserved affliction for the offspring of noble stock (620). Xouthos too addresses Kreousa's presumed childlessness at 658. It is a subtle Euripidean touch that the chorus, passionate about their mistress, and after having witnessed the recognition between Xouthos and Ion will come to understand the oracle as implying childlessness for Kreousa. See also below ch. 3.6. n. 123.

[94] See Assael 1990: 325–27. Dreams of escape are recurrent in Euripidean choral odes: *Hipp.* 732–34; *Hel.* 1478–79; *IT* 1137; *Med.* 440; *Ion* 1238–39. See Barrett on *Hipp.* 1290–93 for a list of example of dramatic characters who wish that they 'may be either swallowed up in the earth or fly up into the sky'. For the possibility that Kreousa's wish for the stars of night is a covert wish for death, cf. the verbally similar *O.T.* 178 ἀκτὰν πρὸς ἑσπέρου θεοῦ, 'towards the shores of the god of evening', which refers to people dying of the plague. See also Owen on 796; Burnett on 798; Lee on 796–9; Rehm 1992: 141.

[95] See below chs. 2.5.2. and 3.3.

[96] See below ch. 3.2.

execute the plan to poison Ion in the tent where Xouthos and his newly-found son are giving a banquet for the city of Delphi (1029–36).

Third Choral Ode (1048–1105)

The chorus now sing a prayer for the success of Kreousa's plan to Einodia, the goddess of the crossways (1048–1105), normally Hekate, an uncanny goddess, with strong associations with the underworld, ghosts, and sorcery; she is often equated with Artemis, but here with Kore, daughter of Demeter (1048). This is a rather recondite piece of theology, which needs to be explained from within the context of the ode and, more widely, of the dramatic plot. Euripides introduces the Eleusinian mysteries later in the ode (1074ff.) and this is probably anticipated at the opening of the ode. The Eleusinian mysteries are very strongly Attic and it is natural that the indignant and patriotic chorus should invoke them at this point: as the uninitiated are banned from the Eleusinian mysteries, so intruders should never reach the Erechtheid palace at Athens.[97] The pendulum has swung violently away from Delphi. The old man has just suggested to Kreousa to burn Apollo's temple down (974), evidently because he considers Apollo responsible for Kreousa's plight. Kreousa, in turn, instructs the old man to poison Ion (1037–38). In the same vein, the chorus pray again for Ion's death (cf. 719–20) using a language which inverts the life-giving rituals of the Eleusinian mysteries.[98]

Fourth Episode (1106–1228)

The atmosphere of foreboding is perpetuated in the messenger's narrative that follows. The messenger enters in search of Kreousa, but urged on by the chorus, embarks on a long speech recounting in detail the unsuccessful attempt against Ion in a narrative replete with allusions to Ion's transition to adulthood and Athens (1106–1228). The report includes a long and detailed description of the layout of the holy tent in which Ion invited all Delphians to celebrate his new identity as Xouthos' son and to bid farewell to Delphi (cf. 665). In this setting, the old man, acting under Kreousa's instructions, intended to poison the illegitimate son of Xouthos before he ever set foot in Athens and laid claim to the Erechtheid throne.[99] The attempt failed

[97] Lee on 1074–89.

[98] See Zeitlin 1996: 304–13, esp. 311 n. 72.

[99] The chorus are the first to locate the feast inside a 'sacred tent' (806). This

due to divine intervention and the rulers of Delphi have now launched a pursuit of Kreousa intending to put her to death by stoning.[100] The violent schism between Delphi and Athens is at its worst here.

Kreousa's servant presents the events in chronological order and from the viewpoint he first experienced them. His report is a subjective rendering of the off-stage events he has witnessed. His choice of adjectives, names and direct quotations reveals where his sympathies lie, if he does not say so explicitly.[101] He begins by reporting Xouthos' last instructions to his newly-found son before he departed to visit the Bacchic shrine on the mountain[102] and to offer his thanksgiving sacrifices for having found his son.[103] Xouthos' words, reported in direct speech,[104] serve as an effective introduction to the messen-

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privileged information on the part of the chorus is deemed a necessary slip that serves the dramatic exigency for the advance planning of the murder plot; see Wilamowitz, on 805–7, Owen on 806, and Lee on 804–7. But, Goldstein 1978: 12–13, argues that since sacrifices cannot occur within the tent, the 'sacred tent' of lines 806 and 982 (cf. 851–52) 'may signify not Ion's pavilion, but a camp site' with digging pits 'where sacrifices could be offered and tents were regularly pitched for the ritual meal' (p. 13), in which case there would be no Euripidean slip here but a simple inference readily made by the chorus, the old tutor and the audience.

[100] On this manner of death, see Steiner 1995: 200–5 and esp. 202 n. 52.

[101] The messenger's subjective opinion is, for instance, evident in the use of the adjective κλεινήν, 'famous' (1106) for Kreousa in his opening line, an early indication of his respect and sympathy for the Athenian queen. See de Jong 1991: 81, 86, 95–6, 102, 138.

[102] The offering of sacrifices to Dionysus motivates his intervention to save Ion in the tent: the poisoned wine is poured to the ground and the dove that tastes it dies in Bacchic convulsions (κἀβάκχευσεν, 1204), screaming unintelligible cries, in an inversion of wine-libation and intoxication. See below ch. 3.2. Note, however, that it is Apollo who is acting through Dionysus and who is credited with the prevention of the murder plot; see 1118 where ὁ θεός is Apollo (as in Th.; below 3.3 n. 61) and, 1563–65.

[103] On the fifth day after a child's birth, the father carries the newborn baby around the hearth of the house in the festival of Amphidromia; see Deubner 1952. On the tenth day, the child is named by the father, as Ion is by Xouthos at 661. Then, visits from friends and relatives are paid and gifts may be offered to the newborn baby. These gifts would be given any time after the child's birth, on the first occasion that the child is seen by the donor, hence their name ὀπτήρια (from ὀπ-, one of the roots for 'to see'); in Callim. *Dian.* 74, such gifts are given to a three-year-old child. On the ritual connotations of ὀπτήρια, see Zeitlin 1996: 312–13 and n. 82. At 1127, Xouthos celebrates the finding of his son by offering sacrifices to Dionysus, the γενέτης θεός (god who presided at the birth, 1130), 'in thanksgiving for the sight of his son', ἀντ' ὀπτηρίων. The sacrifices for the ὀπτήρια (1127) were to do duty for the γενέθλια, the 'birthday offerings' (653); see Lee on 653.

[104] Cf. 651–53, where Xouthos, in person, announced his intentions to give a public feast and mark the beginning of their new life together, and to offer, retrospectively, the customary sacrifices which were due after his son's birth. Cf. also 804–7, where the chorus report to the old man Xouthos' plan, actually echoing

ger's speech (1122–1131). Xouthos' direct request to Ion to start the feast without him in case he is delayed by the sacrifices (1130–31) provides a convenient alibi for the father's absence from his son's banquet.[105]

After reporting Xouthos' charge to Ion to supervise the construction of a well-fitted tent (ἀμφήρεις... σκηνάς, 1128–29), the messenger proceeds with a careful description of the tent, closely following Ion's steps. The youth is reported to have marked out 'solemnly' (1133)[106] the shape of the ten-thousand-square-feet tent with upright posts, ensuring that it is protected from the rays of the sun at noon and at its setting. The vast size of the tent is explained by Ion's intention to invite all the people of Delphi to the banquet (1140; 1166–68). Before he sets out for his trip to Athens, Ion wishes to reciprocate to the city of Delphi the *xenia* he has generously been offered throughout his childhood (805, cf. 323, 640–41).[107]

Upon completing the structure of the tent, Ion takes complete charge of its interior decoration. As steward of the god's wealth (54–5), Ion has access to the treasuries of the Delphic temple. He borrows some personally selected sacred patterned tapestries of various provenances and hangs them as shady awnings (1141–42). He covers the roof with a great overhanging expanse of drapery depicting

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some of his expressions: κοινὴν ξυνάψων δαῖτα παιδί, 'sharing a common meal with my son' (807) is a variant of δαῖτα πρὸς κοινὴν πεσών, 'lying down [literally 'falling'] at a common feast' (652).

[105] See the analysis of Ion's banquet in Schmitt-Pantel 1992: 209–21; she sees a fusion of three different types of meal in Xouthos' proposal of lines 650–55, namely 'repas de reconnaissance, geste d'hospitalité, banquet civique' ('a meal of acknowledgement/recognition, a gesture of hospitality, a civic banquet'), which would emphasize all the more Xouthos' 'inaptitude à la commensalité' ('inability to share meals (with companions)' p. 211). On Xouthos' external status, see Loraux 1993: 207; see also Lee on 1130–2.

[106] Lee on 1133 translates 'with solemn authority' and takes the adverb σεμνῶς to refer to Ion's 'confident, informed manner', comparing it with Hermes' description of Ion's σεμνός way of life at 56. A certain ceremoniality is also to be discerned in Ion's manner (cf. Willetts' translation 'in ritual form') and the order of the banquet proceedings (see Lee on 1169ff.). Ion pays close attention to detail in the setting up of the tent, in the formal invitation of his guests (1166–68), in the call for libation, detection of the ill-omened utterance, emptying, cleansing and re-filling of the wine-cups (1187–95). Note also that the guests wore wreaths before the beginning of the meal (1168–70); and, the old tutor brought water for the washing of the hands after the meal at which time he also burned incense of myrrh (1173–75). Cf. also Ion's use of ceremonial syntax in his monody; see Hoffer 1996: 297.

[107] On Ion's status at Delphi and the discourse of *philoxenia*, see Zeitlin 1996: 319–20, 331–33; on Ion's *trophe* ('nurture') at Delphi, see Schmitt-Pantel 1992: 211–13.

the nocturnal sky; this was a spoil of the Amazons dedicated by Herakles to Apollo as a votive offering (1143–58). The tent has no walls (ἀτοίχους, 1133), so Ion places patterned tapestries on the sides of the tent presumably to shelter it from the sun; these tapestries are expressly of foreign provenance (βαρβάρων ὑφάσματα, 1159) and represent naval battles, creatures half-men half-beasts, and hunting scenes depicting the chase of deer and lions. At the entrance of the tent Ion places a woven textile portraying Kekrops with his daughters, the dedication of an Athenian (1163–65).[108] The interior furnishings of the tent are scarcely mentioned. There is a table in the tent which is not removed after the meal (cf. 1209) to make space for the flute-players (1177). Golden craters are placed in the middle of the tent (1165–66, 1177–78) for the mixing of the wine and the finest metalware vessels are used for drinking (1165–66, 1175, 1181–82).

The form (square with posts), size (covering an area of approximately a quarter of an acre) and decoration of the tent are quite rare and spectacular and seem to have an exotic connotation which warrants comparison with temporary luxurious oriental structures of similar dimensions and function.[109] Gatherings of great numbers of guests attending a sacrificial banquet in celebration of an important event (such as a victory in the Pythian games) or the setting up of a temporary construction to accommodate visitors were quite common at panhellenic sanctuaries in archaic and classical Greece, but the composition of those constructions is routinely ignored.[110] The fact that Ion's tent is decorated so lavishly is quite unusual for a Greek banquet. The exceptional nature of the decoration of Ion's

[108] Lee on 1163–5 argues that the artwork depicting Kekrops and his daughters was not a textile, but a statue, because of the use of the verb ἔστησε (1166). Had Ion brought in a statue from the treasury, one would have expected the messenger in his meticulous description to have noted this both at this instance but also earlier at 1141–42, where it is specified that Ion took 'sacred tapestries' out of the Delphic treasury. The verb ἔστησε at 1166 is better taken as referring to the setting of the golden craters.

[109] In his study of oriental tents (in particular, of the pavilion of Ptolemy II Philadelphos), Studniczka compares Ion's tent to the Persian *Apadana* temporary audience hall which could accommodate hundreds of guests (1914: 28). On the banqueting pavilion of Philadelphos as described by Kallixeinos in Athen. 5.196–97, see Rice 1983 and Green 1995: 115–18. Another famous Persian tent was the one used by Alexander the Great at Susa, probably spoil from Dareios (Athen. 12.538 b-d). And, the tent the Ephesians sent to Alkibiades in 416 BC to celebrate his success at Olympia is identified as 'Persian'; see Athen. 12.534.d; Plut. *Alcib.* 12.1; and, Schmitt-Pantel 1992: 196–201.

[110] See Goldstein 1978: *passim* and esp. 8, 52.

festival tent is highlighted in the focalized narrative of Kreousa's servant (cf. 1142, θαύματ' ἀνθρώποις ὁρᾶν, 'marvels for men to see').[111] The attention paid in the description of its interior decoration is remarkable and its significance can only be understood within the context of the dramatic plot and the historical, political, cultural context and religious practices of the time of the play's production.

Before we embark on a more detailed study of the long ekphrasis in the messenger speech and its significance within the plot of the *Ion*, we will explore the sources for possible antecedents to the structure, composition and function of Ion's festival tent. The most recent excellent study of the relationship between Athens and Persia in the fifth century BC, refutes earlier attempts to relate the tent in the *Ion* to the tent described by Herodotus (9.70; 9.82) as the one left by Xerxes to Mardonius after the battle at Salamis, somehow finding its way to Athens after the battle at Plataia and allegedly serving as the prototype for the construction of the Odeion, built by Themistocles (Vitruv. *De arch.* 5.9.1.) or Pericles (Plut. *Per.* 9).[112] However, even if the direct referent for the structure of the tent Ion set up at Delphi is not Near Eastern luxurious transient architecture,[113] it is likely that both the lavishness of the interior decoration and the function of the tent as a banqueting pavilion honouring an individual and not a collective success evoked Oriental practices.

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[111] This is an example of the messenger as an eyewitness-narrator; see de Jong 1991: 183. The term 'focalization' is a narratological term referring to the perceptional, emotional and intellectual presentation of events experienced by the fictional narrator in the text, the messenger (de Jong 1987: 31–6). As de Jong 1991: 30–56 shows, in most Euripidean messenger speeches the narrator relates the events according to his experiencing focalization, i.e. according to the way he experienced them and not from the viewpoint of the knowledge he acquired after the event (narrating focalization). For examples of experiencing focalization in the messenger speech in the *Ion*, see lines 1187 and 1205–6; an example of narrating focalization is found at 1184–86.

[112] See Miller 1997: 235–36 refuting Broneer 1944; she argues that the Odeion was Periclean (p. 220) and Vitruvius is probably wrong in having Themistocles roof the Odeion (p. 221 n. 13); and, that the tradition linking the Odeion to Xerxes' tent is probably a Hellenistic fabrication (p. 219). Long before Miller's detailed study, Immerwahr 1972: 292–93 and Zeitlin 1996: 318 n. 93 found Broneer's theory attractive. The implausibility of Broneer's idea that Xerxes' tent was used as theatrical skene was pointed out by Taplin 1977: 458 n. 4; surprisingly, Schmitt-Pantel 1992: 220 n. 16 is giving this theory some credit.

[113] Miller 1997: 52 is reluctant to recognize any oriental connotation whatsoever in the design of Ion's tent and argues that it should better be seen in the light of 'the advent of the theme of the luxury tent in Greek literature'.

By the end of the fifth century the influx of textiles from the Near East to Greece had increased.[114] The art of embroidery itself was imported from the Orient, where golden thread is attested early. In the tapestries Ion borrowed from the Delphic treasuries, the tail of Ursa Maior is golden (1154), though the celestial tapestry seems to have been woven with designs rather than embroidered (1146). One of the hunting scenes depicts lions (1162), a motif well attested in the Achaemenid tradition; and, the half-men half-beast creatures (1161) are motifs with a long history in both the Greek and the Near Eastern tradition. By the second half of the fifth century there were many workshops in Greece staffed with imported slaves who could produce such patterned textiles in the Achaemenid tradition, but the text is quite clear on the foreign origin of the tapestries on the sides. Another scene on the sides of the tent depicts a naval battle between foreign and Greek vessels and it may provide the reason for the presence of the tapestry at Delphi, probably a spoil from war; in any case, the spectators would probably recall the Athenian victory at Salamis or later conflicts between the Persians and the allied forces of the Delian league.[115]

We will now examine the function of the tent in comparison with the contemporary practices of two Athenian dignitaries, Pericles and Alcibiades. In the second half of the fifth century, Pericles requisitioned the necessary funding from the treasury of the Delian League to commission a series of spectacular buildings on the Acropolis' hill, thus fashioning a clear and unsurpassed emblem of Athenian national identity for allies and adversaries alike and for centuries to come. One of the most magnificent buildings was the Odeion, built as a victory monument honouring the role of Athens in the Persian defeat of the first quarter of the century. Pericles deliberately adapts here Persian architecture, borrowing from the East 'meaningful symbols of rank and status', to promote Athenian imperial propaganda.[116] The Oriental fashion of *trophe* ('nurture') where the revenues of a city earmarked for communal consumption are used to cater for personal needs, is imitated both by some Athenian eccentric aristocrats,

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[114] See Miller 1997: 75–81 with bibliography. Cf. Arist. *Frogs* 938, Μηδικὰ παραπετάσματα, 'Persian hangings'.

[115] Lee on 1158–62.

[116] On the imperial symbolism of the Odeion, see Miller 1997: 239–42; quotation from p. 241.

such as Alcibiades as we will see, but also by the Athenian city-state itself which appropriates the communal funds of the Delian League to complete the construction of the Acropolis' buildings, once again cashing in on the Athenian glory of the beginning of the century. The most 'superfluous' of all the Acropolis buildings was the Odeion, in that 'it was build to be [as an Athenian imperial symbol] rather than to do'.[117] Ion adorned his tent with a dedication by Heracles, a reminder of the successful subjugation of the subversive Amazons; with a foreign textile (a spoil from barbarian lands?), a reminder of the naval victories of the Greeks over the Persians; and, with an Athenian dedication depicting Kekrops in a serpent-like form, a testimony of the Athenian claim to autochthony. Is Ion's choice of artwork (unintentionally) articulating the Athenian imperial agenda of the late fifth century? Interestingly, Kreousa's Athenian servant offers a flowing account of the tapestries in Ion's tent, identifying over a dozen individual figures and scenes, and confidently distinguishing between Athenian and barbarian art (cf. 1164–65; 1159). Visual arts and architecture were efficient media for the communication of the Athenian nationalist discourse of the late fifth century and this may explain the frequency of pictorial vocabulary in a play which stages the Athenian foundation myth. The messenger is the third in a series of servants to use pictorial language; the chorus (184–218), Ion (265–85; esp. 271) and the messenger, all in turn describe works of art. Euripides constantly draws on the iconographical motifs common in vase-paintings, sculptures and weaving;[118] he appropriates the sign-system of the visual arts, itself part of a larger common cultural

[117] On the function of the Odeion, see Miller 1997: 232–35; quotation from p. 235.

[118] The evident examples are the ekphraseis in the parodos and the messenger speech, the description of the birds in Ion's monody and the description of the birth tokens, esp. Kreousa's weaving (1417–36); cf. also the reference to the statue of Athena holding the golden spear in the Acropolis (χρυσολόγχου Παλλάδος, 'Athena of the golden spear', 9; cf. fr. 351 N^2); the stichomythia on the Athenian myths (265–85, esp. 269–71); the first appearance of Ion as 'Apollo's icon', holding a bow and wearing a laurel-wreath (see Wiles 1997: 204–5); Apollo grasping Kreousa's white wrist (891), as a metaphor commonly associated with abduction scenes in visual arts of the period; see ch. 2.5.2, n. 157. On Euripides' pictorial language, see Wolff 1965: 192 n. 21; Barlow 1971; Zeitlin 1994; Segal 1995a: 208–9. Such language was misconstrued by ancient biographers who argued that Euripides was first a painter and then became a poet (*Euripides' Origins and Life* 6, 33; *Suda* 4); see Lefkowitz 1981: 91, 94. Surprisingly, this misinterpretation has found credence among some modern critics; Owen on 163, cites this information as genuine.

vocabulary, and employs it as a shorthand of imperial Athens in 412 BC.[119]

If the lavishness, symbolism and, partially, the function of Ion's festival tent recalled the Periclean imperialist tendencies best expressed in the construction of the Odeion, then this would not only be another example of Athenian resonances in Delphic territory, but could also raise questions about Ion's intentions and character. Yet it would be going too far to argue with some scholars that Ion is following the customs of oriental leaders and acting (unintentionally) as an arrogant and monarchic prince when he prepares his festival tent.[120] Alcibiades undoubtedly acted like a barbarian prince when he hosted a sacrificial banquet to celebrate his chariot-victory at Olympia in 416 BC and transgressed all the limits set for the correct behavior of the Athenian citizen by confiscating the sacred vessels of the city for his feast and thus placing the community in the service of the individual.[121] But, Ion, the future Athenian ruler, wishes to make no such transgressions. He is fully aware of the limitations of his foreign status in Athens and does not wish to challenge the tradition of the exclusion of foreigners from the political arena of autochthonous Athens (589–606); neither does he envy the status of the monarch (625–28). He is content with his quiet life at the Delphic sanctuary and values it more than material wealth (630–47). Ion owns nothing and it is for this reason that he borrows all necessary materials from the Delphic treasuries to adorn and equip the tent. All materials are sacred: the tent itself (806, 982), the tapestries (1141) and the wine-craters (1195); and Ion treats them with the utmost care.[122] For his festival banquet he extends an open invitation to all Delphians (1140; 1167f.), though his alleged father suggests he invites his friends alone (663, 1131). Ion's gesture is best taken as a manifestation of his gratefulness and reciprocity of *xenia* towards the Delphians but is also indicative of the generosity of the future Athenian ruler. Euripides has provided in Ion an all-inclusive model of the Athenian ruler; at the same time as employing the Athenian imperial vocabulary of late fifth-century in the selected woven tapestries,

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[119] On the use of iconography in nationalist narratives in contemporary culture, see Sørensen 1996 with regard to Denmark.
[120] For this view see Immerwahr 1972: 292–93.
[121] See above n. 109; Schmitt-Pantel 1992: 197, 200.
[122] See above n. 106.

he stresses Ion's generosity in a gesture that presents what Athens ought to be in order to overcome the current crisis of the Peloponnesian war: generous to allies but fierce to dangerous foes, and in full alert as is Ion when he discovers the plot of the old tutor; he bares his arms and grabs the tutor by the arm, conducts a thorough search, cross-examines him and renders him to a make-shift court of law who condemns both his actions and Kreousa's and authorizes the pursuit of the Athenian queen (1208–25).

We may now continue with a closer analysis of the dramatic function of the ekphrasis within the context of the play. The long *ekphrasis* in the messenger speech is a deliberate narrative device[123] intended to frame the action, locate the miraculous reversal of Kreousa's plan in an evocative ritualistic atmosphere, and foreground Ion's transition from childhood to adulthood,[124] from Delphi to Athens. The tent itself is a house of illusion: the banquet occurs during the day but the night is simulated on the celestial tapestry on the roof of the tent; Ion is admitted to a symbolic representation of Athens; the real representatives of Athens are absent and the old tutor puts on a performance in the middle of the tent, which fortunately is uncovered by Ion in the nick of time.[125] The listeners are encouraged to

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[123] The earlier view that the ekphrasis is a pointless delay, 'evidently contrary to dramatic exigency', (Wolff 1965: 180; also, Hourmouziades 1965: 114) is superseded by a renewed interest in the iconography of Ion's tent, see Burnett 1962: 96; Immerwahr 1972: 291–92; Mueller 1975: 39–44; Mastronarde 1975: 169; Sousa e Silva 1985–86: 34–9; Chalkia 1986: 105–8; Goff 1988; Zeitlin 1996: 316–20, 326–31 and 1994: 152–54.

[124] The tapestries of the tent have also been taken as representations of Ion's transition from ephebic status to Athenian citizenhood, Goff 1988. For Ion as ephebe see below ch. 3.4. One might also find parallels between Ion's banquet in the tent and the festival of *Apellai* at Delphi or the *Apatouria* at Athens during the course of which the youths are initiated to manhood and admitted into the phratry or citizen body. On the festival of the *Apellai*, see Homolle 1895: esp. p. 11 (inscription of the Λαβυάδαι, 5th century BC) and pp. 41–47 (discussion of the festival). For Apollo/Apellon the archetypal *ephebos*, see below ch. 3.4; also Burkert 1985: 144–45. See also Schmitt-Pantel 1992: 81–90 for the *Apellai* at Delphi and the *Apatouria* at Athens. At the *Apellai*, the new citizen (young or adopted) offered sacrifice and organized a banquet for the community; in the case of the *Apatouria*, the expense of the festival was covered by the *demos*, though the fathers of the initiands might have supplied the sacrificial victims and the wine, in an atmosphere of solidarity which reinforced the strong links between the members of the phratry (who shared the same ancestor) in preparation for the admission of the new members. The association between these festivals and Ion's banquet may have enabled the audience to recreate the right atmosphere for the narrated action of the tent.

[125] Zacharia 1995: 55.

transport themselves mentally into the tent, gaze at the wonderful tapestries (1142) and engage in the process of unravelling the imagery of the tapestries to fully appreciate the thematic implications of the iconographical motifs for the whole of the play.

The diction of the embroidered tapestries in the tent is not straightforward. We have so far presented our preferred reading of the tapestries, but the textile backdrops in the tent bear numerous more interpretations some of which significantly reinforce our interpretation, and all contribute to the understanding of the richness and complexity of this poetic fabric and the play as a whole. Heaven is clearly depicted on the roof[126] and earth on the walls, and in this assertion of regularity we are meant to salute the symbolic triumph of civilization over primitive violence, and the restoration of divine order[127] and probe the issue of 'the place of force within politics, of violence within order'.[128] Another reading finds the entire universe replicated in the three spatial levels encountered in the tapestries and the tent (heaven at the top, mortal combat on the sides, and death in the tent itself) and in the three temporal levels (mythical, historical, and fictional time).[129] The presence of the female is never lost, but is implicated in the chosen medium of artistic expression (weaving) and probably in some of the depicted scenes.[130]

The dramatic function of the tent concerns Ion and the meaning of his being recognized as heir to the Athenian throne; from the

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[126] For the motif of the circular motion of sun, moon and stars in the sky, cf. Achilles' shield in *Iliad* 18. 483–89, where there is also a reference to the Pleiades, the Hyades, Orion and Arktos; see Hagstrum 1958: 19–22; Kurman 1974: 1–4; Sousa e Silva 1985–86: 36; Zeitlin 1996: 324. Cf. also the Blacas Vase in Schefold 1981: 294.

[127] Mastronarde 1975: 169.

[128] Goff 1988: 49; see also Hoffer 1996.

[129] Chalkia 1986: 105–10. With regard to the temporal levels, Chalkia finds mythical time and divine serenity in the tapestry of the Amazons, historical time in the battles of Greeks and barbarians on the walls and fictional time in the Athenian tapestry above the door. Chalkia observes that the three spatial levels correspond to three temporal levels in Ion's life, namely his conception in the cave in the past, his childhood in Delphi in the present and his future life in Athens.

[130] Zeitlin 1996: 326–31, takes the concluding lines of the preceding choral ode (1090 1105), where the Athenian maidens voice their wish for a reversal of roles, as the frame to Kreousa's attack against Ion; in her reading of the signs of the woven constellations on the tent's roof, the figure of the Pleiad (the singular is perhaps intentional), the female pursued by the male Orion with his sword ever drawn, is succeeded by the Arktos, 'the javelin-bearing goddess of the full moon', perhaps a covert reference to Kreousa's transformation from victim of rape to avenger.

perspective of the large-scale dynamic of the play, it concerns the relationship between Athens and Delphi in the experience of Ion and Kreousa. With the messenger's description of the interior of the tent this enclosed space is laid open for the chorus and the spectators, just as within the play it was open to anyone wishing to join the feast, citizens of Delphi and the visitors to the shrine alike, including the messenger himself. Recent critics have recorded the similarities between the tent and the Delphic temple.[131] Yet, though in many respects the tent mirrors the temple of Apollo, there is a fundamental difference between the two: the tent is accessible to all, whereas the temple's interior (*adyton*) remains hidden to the uninitiated and maintains its secrecy throughout the play. In fact, all the other interior spaces mentioned in the play are sooner or later opened up except for Apollo's *adyton*;[132] and all of these spaces, when they are eventually uncovered, turn out to contain traces of Athens: the cradle (1417–36), the cave, Kreousa's inner feelings.[133] Athenian material keeps coming up in the most unlikely places; in the two long ekphraseis of the play, both the pedimental sculptures of the Apolline temple and the Delphic tent are revealed to bear the mark of Athens.

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[131] See Giraud 1987: 90 n. 52. Goff 1988: 51 and n. 14, compares the tent with the other 'womb-like enclosures' in the play; Zeitlin 1996: 319 brings out the parallels between the tent, the temple and Pan's cave, following Loraux 1993: 222 and n. 171, who offers a valuable insight into the motif of uncovering and hiding in the play (pp. 230–33 and n. 219); cf. also Chalkia 1986: 116ff.

[132] Though the *adyton* remains hidden and inaccessible, the temple-doors open twice in the course of the play to release information concerning Ion's parentage, and in this sense the temple functions as another 'womb-like enclosure'. First, Xouthos comes out with the false oracular answer which identifies Ion as his son (517–18); then, the Pythia emerges holding Ion's cradle containing his birth-tokens (1320–21) which leads to the correct recognition of mother and son; this time Ion will discover his descent from the Olympian Apollo, whereas through his conception and birth in the cave his chthonic descent is emphasized as an important element of his identity, and understandably so, if he is to be considered a member of the Athenian royal chthonic line.

[133] At her first entry, Kreousa weeps at the sight of the oracle (241ff.), but she is determined to keep her private thoughts to herself (256–57). In the immediately preceding scene, Ion had secured the secrecy of the temple's *adyton* (222–23). Both Apollo and Kreousa have managed to keep outsiders at a distance. Later, when Kreousa learns about the oracular answer and her husband's plot, she breaks her silence and unburdens her heart of her long-kept pain (859–61). Note that though Ion's attitude changes (1546–48), the secrecy of the *adyton* is maintained and Ion is prevented from entering the temple by Athena's timely arrival.

III. *Athens succeeding Delphi (1250–1622)*

Closing Sequence (1250–1622)

The conflict of interests between the advocates of the rights of the Athenian royal line (Kreousa, the old man, the chorus) and the advocates of the Delphic oracle (Ion, the Delphians, Xouthos) has gradually been surfacing ever since the false recognition scene (510ff.). The clash finally assumes a physical dimension and is first narrated (esp. 1208–26) and then visually represented on stage at the crux of the play in the beginning of the fifth episode, when Ion enters in pursuit of Kreousa, sword in hand (1258; cf. 1309) and Kreousa confesses that she has tried to kill him as befits an enemy of her house (1291). At this point Kreousa has already followed the chorus' advice (1255–60) and offered herself as a suppliant on the altar of Apollo (1285). It is this act that initiates the bridging of the gap between the opposing parties (and their corresponding dramatic settings) as it figuratively places 'Athens in Delphi's lap'.

Ion, imbued with hatred for Kreousa, expresses his frustration at the laws (*nomos*) protecting such an evil suppliant (1312ff.).[134] Pythia's timely intervention prevents him from further blasphemy (1320); she asserts that he is wrongly being cruel (1327) and works to lessen his resolution to return evil for evil (ἀνταπολλύναι, 1328). First, she invites Ion to view Kreousa's actions within the context of her position as a stepmother who is asked to take in a child from her husband's previous relationship (1329);[135] she then calls attention to his imminent journey to Athens and the provision that he remains pure and secures good omens (1331–33).[136] The Pythia claims to be acting according to Apollo's wish (1353) when she steps out of the temple to bid farewell to her foster child, hand him over the cradle with his swaddling clothes and urge him to launch a search for his real mother.

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[134] Ion's concern with the moral and institutional meaning of *nomos* (propriety, law) is also manifested earlier at 439–51; see Hoffer 1996: 309–10.

[135] The Pythia had herself shown ὠμότης when she first saw that a woman had abandoned her child at the temple steps, but her sternness gave way to pity for the child and became the closest he ever had to a mother; compare οἴκτωι δ' ἀφῆκεν ὠμότητα, 47, with ὠμός ὢν ἁμαρτάνεις, 1327.

[136] Note how Ion employs an idea put forth by the old man (1046–7) and Kreousa (1291), namely that one is entitled to harm his enemies and still retain one's purity (1334).

Ion promises to comb all of Asia and the lands of Europe for his mother (1356), but, once the Pythia leaves the stage, he hesitates to open the cradle for fear of finding out that he is base-born and is hence deprived of παρρησία, freedom of speech (1380–84; cf. 670–72).[137] In the end, he plucks up his courage and looks into the cradle, which has remained miraculously intact and untouched by time (1391–94; cf. 1435–36). Kreousa identifies one by one his birth tokens: an unfinished piece of weaving (Kreousa's apprentice-work) depicting the Gorgon and fringed with snakes in the fashion of an *aegis* (1417–25), a golden necklace of dragons for the new-born to wear in imitation of Athena's gift to Erichthonios (1427–31),[138] and an unwithered wreath of the olive tree which Athena planted on the Acropolis (1433–36). The strong Athenian associations of the birth tokens and their immaculate condition seem to have encapsulated Athens' past and to have transferred it into the Delphic present. The recognition between mother and son, frustrated for so long, finally occurs in a temporary suspension of time and place.[139]

After the recognition scene, mother and son begin to reconstruct the past. Once again Kreousa relates the events leading up to the exposure of her son (1468ff.).[140] Yet Ion is not convinced of the identity of his true father (1520ff.) and prepares to enter the temple in search of the truth (1546ff.).[141] Athena's appearance *ex machina* restores order, offers an aetiological prediction of the future of the Ionian race (1575–88) and of Kreousa's and Xouthos' common offspring (κοινὸν γένος, 1589), asserts Apollo's divine providence (1595–1600), and brings together the two dramatic worlds of Athens and Delphi under her *aegis*; the eponymous goddess of Athens (1555) is a worthy ὁδουρός, 'guide' (lit. 'guardian of the journey', 1617), for the procession of Ion and Kreousa to her city. Ion as the son of Apollo

[137] See the interesting analysis of Foucault 2001 on *Ion* as a parrhesiastic play.

[138] On Ion's birth and exposure as a repetition of Erichthonios' birth, see Loraux 1993: 193–95. See also below, ch. 2.4.1.

[139] See Lee 1996: 100–3.

[140] At the introduction to her narration of Ion's birth, Kreousa uses a phrase which underlines his otherness and conveniently encapsulates his status: ἄλλοθεν γέγονας, ἄλλοθεν, 'from elsewhere were you begotten, from elsewhere', 1472.

[141] Ion's heart is troubled: ὁ θεὸς ἀληθὴς ἢ μάτην μαντεύεται' 'is the god's oracle true or false [lit. 'in vain']?', 1537. On this passage and the question of truth or falsehood in the play, see Wolff 1965: 187–90; on the god's mystifications and Ion's role as demystifier, see Dunn 2000: 26–7. See also below ch. 3.

bears Delphi within himself and, as the son of Kreousa, carries autochthonous blood in his vein. His autochthonous descent permits him to rule Athens; Athena predicts a bright future for him: he will become renowned in the whole of Greece (1573–75) and his sons will win glory (1588). The future Athenian ruler leaves his childhood environment with the sanctioning of the god of the Panhellenic sanctuary, having secured the public affirmation of his divine paternity (1560), and is accompanied by the guardian deity of Athens.

The chorus' prayer in the third choral ode which strongly recalls the Attic Eleusinian mysteries, is paradoxically fulfilled at the end of the play: there occurs an ascent, or, more accurately, a rejuvenation of Erechtheus (ἀνηβᾶι δ' Ἐρεχθεύς, 1465), and not a descent to the underworld earlier anticipated for Kreousa in case her plan failed (εἰς ἄλλας βιότου κάτεισι μορφάς, 'she will go down to a different sort of existence', 1061–68). Kreousa too evokes the language of descent in reference to Ion only to negate it immediately (ὃν κατὰ γᾶς ἐνέρων/χθονίων μέτα Περσεφόνας τ' ἐδόκουν ναίειν, 'whom I believed to be living with those below the earth and with Persephone', 1441–42). For Ion does not die (cf. 1444), but acquires his identity and founds the Athenian royal palace (δῶμ' ἑστιοῦται, 1464). As for Kreousa, the chorus had predicted that if her plan was not fulfilled (ἀτελὴς 1061), she, who comes from a noble palace, would not bear to live in the bright light (<ἐν> φαενναῖς . . . αὐγαῖς, 1071–72) and see strangers as rulers in her home (1069–73). Yet in the end, not only Kreousa, but also her noble palace of the earth-born comes out of darkness (ὅ τε γηγενέτας δόμος οὐκέτι νύκτα δέρκεται, 1466) and 'recovers its sight in the sun's gleaming rays' (ἀελίου δ' ἀναβλέπει λαμπάσιν, 1467). And, instead of Einodia arriving to lead Ion to Hades (cf. ὅδωσον, 1051), Athena comes to head Ion's procession to Athens.

This play, which is set in the holy precinct of Apollo at Delphi but dramatizes centrally important figures in Athenian civic mythology, weaves together the lines of Athens and Delphi in a complicated set of parallels, conflicts, entanglements, and unknottings. Apollo's decision to rescue the exposed baby Ion and to have Hermes transport him to Delphi and then lead Kreousa to the sanctuary in request for an oracle for the bearing of an heir to the Athenian royal line, sets Athenian characters in a Delphic location and creates apparent incompatibilities which later lend themselves to creative tensions and

satisfying resolutions. To adapt the terminology of Aristotle's *Poetics*,[142] the *desis*, which knots together the lines of conflict of the plot, sets into potentially violent contrast with one another the line of Athens with that of Delphi, after a beginning which had shadowed the possibility of an amicable parallel existence of the two settings. And the *lusis*, which at the end decisively resolves the conflicts, at the same time removes any possibility of tension between Delphi and Athens and guarantees their deep friendship and mutual loyalty forever.

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[142] See Aristotle *Poetics* 18.1455b 24–33.

CHAPTER TWO

ATHENIAN FOUNDATION MYTHS AND THE *ION*; IONIANISM AND AUTOCHTHONY

. . . ἀλλ' ἐλεύθεροι
παρρησίαι θάλλοντες οἰκοῖεν πόλιν
κλεινῶν 'Αθηνῶν, μητρὸς οὕνεκ' εὐκλεεῖς

. . . but rather that they may live in glorious Athens
as free men, free of speech and flourishing,
enjoying good repute where their mother is
concerned

Euripides' *Hippolytus* 421–23 (tr. Kovacs)

2.1. Introduction

Two important political themes are prominent, and ingeniously combined, in Euripides' *Ion*. The first is Ionianism, that is the Ionian character of Athens, and the supposed connection between Athens as colonial metropolis or founding city on the one hand and the Ionians as colonists on the other. The Euripidean genealogy of Ion, according to which he was son of Apollo, assumes that Apollo is πατρῶιος, the common ancestral god of both Athenians and Ionians,[1]

[1] The view I follow is that of Smarczyk 1990: 363 (against the scepticism of Wilamowitz about whether the Ionians recognized Apollo as Patroos), cf. Dougherty 1996: 261. The main non-Euripidean texts in which Apollo is said to be *patroos* because of his paternity of Ion are Plato, *Euthyd.* 302 c–d, 'Απόλλων πατρῷος διὰ τὴν τοῦ Ἴωνος γένεσιν, and Diod. 16.57.4, where it is said of the Athenians that they boasted τὸν 'Απόλλωνα πατρῷον αὐτῶν εἶναι καὶ πρόγονον. This is from Diodorus' account of the third Sacred War, his source for which is much disputed. It was probably not Ephorus but some other fourth-century historian such as Demophilos, Diyllos or Duris; see Markle 1994 and McQueen 1995. Plato may merely be following the innovator Euripides: see Parker 1987: 213 n. 80, who observes that 'Apollo's epithet [*patroos*] is explicable without reference to Ion'; Parker does not discuss the evidence of Diodorus or the problem of his source at 16.57, a passage which is perhaps less likely than Plato to be derived from Euripides, though one cannot be absolutely sure that καὶ πρόγονον was not a flourish added by Diodorus himself. In *OCD*[3], under '*patrooi theoi*', Parker (i) accepts the usual view that Apollo was *patroos* to the Ionians and (ii) links this with his role as father of the Ionian ancestor Ion; as he nicely puts it there, the 'ancestral god is also an ancestor god'. Contrast 1987: 207 where he argued that Euripides' innovation was

and is identical with both Apollo Pythios the god of Delphi and with Apollo of Delos.[2]

The second idea is autochthony, the idea that the Athenians were 'earth-born', *gegeneis* (see below 2.3.), and had always occupied the same land: Ion's mother Kreousa is descended from the earth-born kings of Athens. I shall argue that Ionianism and autochthony were related via a contrast with a third notion, that of Dorianism; that the Athenians were proud of being both Ionian and autochthonous; and that *Ion* is both a document of this twofold pride and also a reassertion of Ionianism in particular, at a moment of great imperial despondency. Autochthony is important, but is not unique to *Ion*; it featured in *Erechtheos* and perhaps also in *Melanippe Sophe*. It is emphatic Ionianism which gives *Ion* its unique importance for the classical literary scholar and historian.

Another view has however been advanced. The stress on the Ionians as colonists of the Athenians has been seen[3] as an actual denial or rejection of the Ionian ancestry of the Athenians themselves: instead of belonging to a large and undifferentiated category of Ionians, all of whom (as another myth had it) came from the Peloponnese,[4] the Athenians were colonisers of the Ionians, but could themselves boast the oldest and most prestigious origin possible, namely the Earth. That is, they were 'autochthonous'. The myth of Athenian colonization of Ionia is thus (it is argued) a way of reconciling Athens' undoubted Ionianism with the idea of Athenian autochthony.[5] The two leading notions of the *Ion*, Ionianism and

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too bold to be taken up by the subsequent tradition, which left Ion as a general and an immigrant. Complete consistency in the traditions should not be looked for: if Euripides was innovating, it was an innovation which fitted snugly onto existing notions and habits. For further discussions and suggestions see Hedrick 1988 who connects the cult of Apollo with Peisistratos, and Cole 1997 who reads the *Ion* as a new departure from the tradition, a complete re-mythicization by Euripides.

[2] On the identification with Apollo Pythios, see Hedrick 1988: 200; Smarczyk 1990: 364 n. 83; both cite Dem. 18.141. On the identification with Apollo Delios see Smarczyk 1990: 364–65 n. 84. For the closeness of Delphic and Delian Apollo see further below ch. 3.3. For the precinct of 'Apollo and Poseidon' at Aegina in the time of the Athenian empire see below n. 37: both Apollo and Poseidon had Ionian associations which may be played on in the *Ion* despite Aegina's firmly Dorian character.

[3] Hall 1997b: 54–5.

[4] The father (Melanthos) and a son (Neleus) of the Athenian king Kodros were supposed to have come from Messenian Pylos. See Hall 1997b: 51.

[5] That is the clear implication of Hall 1997b: 56 where he speaks of 'reconciliation between Ionian and autochthonous origins' as the context in which *Ion* must

autochthony, were thus closely related. This is a neat view and plausible up to a point; but it is too simple. Even in the *Ion*, where Athenian autochthony is certainly asserted early and emphatically (29), Athens' Ionian ancestry is not rejected: on the contrary. At the end of the play Athena certainly predicts the colonization of Ionia and the islands by the descendants of Ion's sons, but immediately before that it is predicted in clear terms that the sons of Ion will themselves 'give their names to the land and the tribal people of Attica, those who inhabit my rock' (1575–78).[6] So the Athenians are after all represented as being of Ionian descent and there is no denial or refusal to acknowledge that the Athenians are themselves Ionians.[7]

Despite this objection, it remains true and important that Ionianism and autochthony were related notions, but for the different reason already mentioned above, namely because they are both contrasted with Dorianism. This is more obviously true of Ionianism than of autochthony. In fifth-century political discourse the word 'Ionian' is regularly contrasted, implicitly or explicitly, with 'Dorian'.[8] Occasionally contemporaries of Euripides even speak as if the combination of 'Dorians' and 'Ionians' exhausted the larger category of 'Greeks', although in fact there were other sub-groups such as Aiolians. When

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be situated (on p. 55 he writes, at different points on the page, of the Athenians as promoting or accepting their own Ionian 'associations', 'kinship', 'identity', and 'relationship'); again, '[t]he vital point is that while the Ionians will take their name from Ion, Ion himself is not an Ionian. Thus autochthony is preserved alongside an emphasis on the *unilineal* genetic relationship between Athenians and Ionians' (56; his italics).

[6] Cf. Lee on 1575–8 rightly sees here a reference to Attica as a whole (although strictly 'my rock' means the acropolis): '[b]efore the reforms of Kleisthenes in 509 the people of Attica were divided into four tribes; Athena gives their founders a common heritage as sons of Attica'. Myths were almost infinitely flexible and it is not objection to this interpretation to say that normally Theseus, as the original synoikizer of Attica, was associated with the process of unification here implied. Hall's summary of the conclusion of the play (Hall 1997b: 56) jumps straight to the colonization of the regions beyond Attica, and omits the allusion to Attica itself.

[7] It is not clear from Dougherty 1996: 261 whether she believes that the Athenians are themselves Ionians; she speaks of 'relations between Athenians and Ionians', and this might be taken to imply that they are not; but she goes on to use the composite expression 'Athenian/Ionian'.

[8] On Dorians *versus* Ionians, Will 1956 remains an important study, although his conclusion that the Dorian/Ionian dichotomy was a mere rhetorical construct has been vigorously and effectively challenged by Alty 1982. Alty's article in fact contains two theses, the anti-Will thesis, which has been generally and rightly accepted, and the much less plausible thesis that the Athenians were ashamed of being Ionians; on this see further below pp. 50ff.

Kroisos of Lydia asks who are the most powerful Greeks he is told that, to translate literally, 'the Spartans and Athenians excel, the one of [i.e. representative of] the Dorian *genos*, the other of the Ionian'.[9] But autochthony also carries with it an implication unfavourable to Dorians in general and in particular to Athens' enemies the Spartans, who as we have just seen were regarded as the pre-eminent Dorian power. The Athenians prided themselves on their autochthony not just because it conferred prescriptive rights to territory, but because in Greek mythology the Dorians were newcomers and thus junior and inferior.

In this chapter I shall discuss Ionianism first and then move on to autochthony. Logically, autochthony might be thought to be prior if we accept the theory that the emphasis on Athens as colonizer of Ionia is a way of saving the antecedent notion of autochthony by rejecting Athens' own Ionian ancestry; but we have just seen that Euripides does not reject it. Chronologically, Ionianism is arguably prior: the idea of Athenian autochthony seems to have blossomed in the fifth century,[10] whereas the idea that Athens was the 'oldest land of Ionia' is found already in Solon (fr. 4a *IEG*^{2}) i.e. in the early sixth century. The truth may be that two old but amorphous ideas developed vigorously and simultaneously during the fifth-century period of maximum tension with the Dorian Spartans.[11] That is, neither logical nor chronological priority can be fixed with any confidence. I have decided to deal with Ionianism first, and then to deal at greater length with autochthony, chiefly because of the greater structural importance and complexity of the latter theme in the play. The concepts 'earth-born' and 'autochthonous' are introduced even earlier than that of Ionian colonization (lines 20 and 29, as opposed to

[9] Hdt. 1.56.2. For *genos* here see Jones 1996: 317ff. There is a complication in that the Herodotus passage goes on to say that the Athenians were Pelasgians and the Dorians were Greeks, the one group (the Pelasgians) had never moved while the other (the Greeks) had 'wandered much'. In a way this neatly combines Ionianism plus autochthony on the one hand, and Dorianism and 'wandering' on the other, and thus suits exactly the argument of the present chapter. But it has the curious implication that the Athenians were somehow not Greeks; for this point see Thomas 2000: 117–22. I cannot here go into the complexities of the 'Pelasgians', who are not relevant to the *Ion*.

[10] Rosivach 1987.

[11] Modern scholars plausibly argue that the polarization between Dorians and Ionians occurred between the Persian and Peloponnesian Wars; see Parker 1987, and further below 2.2.

line 74). And I shall argue that the presentation of both Ion and Kreousa is conditioned by their relation to their autochthonous predecessors and prototypes in the mythical history of Athens. The Ionian theme, by contrast, although it was an extremely important part of fifth-century Athenian imperial image-making, and though its announcement forms the climax of the *Ion*, is dramatically less important in that it features only at the beginning and end of the play and performs no obvious organic function within it. It can therefore be dealt with first and separately.

2.2. Ionianism and the Ion

The *Ion* announces Athenian 'colonization' of Ionia[12] and thus touches directly on a topical imperial theme: it was in virtue of their notional kinship with Athens as colonizing 'mother-city', a solemnly regarded religious relationship,[13] that the Ionians asked the Athenians to be their leaders after the Persian Wars, and Athenian acceptance of this appeal led directly to the formation of the Delian League or Athenian Empire.[14] For this reason the *Ion* is a very political play, if we take 'political' in a wide sense which includes religious justification for state policies. *Ion* is certainly one of the most interesting of all surviving fifth-century tragedies for the modern political and religious historian of democratic and imperial Athens: the scholarly attention accorded to the *Ion* in recent years, after relative neglect, is surely to be explained in part by the way Greek religion has moved from the edges of Greek historical studies to their centre.[15] Aeschylus' *Persae* and less obviously his *Eumenides* describe or allude to datable contemporary events: the Persian wars; the reforms of the Areopagos; perhaps the First Peloponnesian War and Athens' Argive alliance.[16]

[12] Lines 74 (Hermes' prologue) and 1587ff. (Athena's epiphany).

[13] See, for instance, such texts as Th. 1.25.4, and generally Malkin 1987.

[14] Th. 1.95.1; see Smarczyk 1990: 451–63.

[15] Davies 1997b: 31.

[16] There is modern dispute about how far the *Eumenides*, which closes with the establishment of the Athenian court of the Areopagos (reformed a very few years before the play's production), has a political message; see Sommerstein 1989: 25–32, 216 (n. on lines 685–90) and 1996: 392–402 at 401 for an excellent discussion, concluding that the play was indeed political but that Aeschylus was deliberately evasive in his comments on the recent reforms. For *Persae*, see Hall 1989 *passim* and her ed. of the play (1996), also Pelling 1997 and Harrison 2000.

These Aeschylean plays have traditionally received much more scholarly attention than *Ion,* presumably because the latter's most explicit political references are to a less immediately tangible theme (Athens' religious role as mother-city of Ionia) which runs through the entire fifth century; but I believe that the play should, no less than *Eumenides,* be tied to a particular moment in Athenian domestic and imperial history.[17] None of Sophocles' surviving plays is as obviously political as the *Ion,* but I have argued elsewhere that his lost *Tereus* resembled *Ion* in that it explored the theme of what has been called 'kinship diplomacy', with the obvious difference that the mythical kinship explored in the *Tereus* was between Athens and Thrace rather than between Athens and Ionia.[18] The closest thematic analogue to the *Ion* may have been a famous lost tragedy of Phrynichus which described the fall of Miletus to the Persians in 494 BC, at the end of the Ionian revolt.[19] Herodotus reports the distress of the Athenians at Phrynichus' handling of so sensitive a subject; they did not like being reminded of 'troubles so close to home' (as οἰκήια κακά should certainly be taken).[20] This expression refers to the close sentimental connection between the Athenians and the Ionians and to the Athenian claim to be the founding mother-city or metropolis of Ionia. The date of Phrynichus' play is uncertain: it has been suggested that the prefix of Herodotus' verb ἀναμνήσαντα, 'reminded', (ἀνα- = 'back') should be given full weight and that the play was produced some years after the event it described, perhaps in the 480s.[21] But even if the play was not quite contemporary with 494, the episode is early

[17] For the probability that *Ion* is to be associated with the moment of imperial crisis after the Sicilian disaster, see above ch. 1.2.

[18] See Zacharia 2001. For kinship diplomacy, see Jones 1999. Other lost Sophoclean plays like the *Aigeus* and *Triptolemos* may also have had political resonances; on the latter, and some other lost plays, see Zacharia 2003.

[19] Hdt. 6.21. Modern discussions often refer to this play as *The Sack of Miletus,* although strictly the exact title is not known; Herodotus says only that its subject was the fall of Miletus.

[20] Herodotus' strong emphasis on the Milesians as colonists of the Athenians at 5.97.2 (in the mouth of Aristagoras) is enough to render unlikely the recently fashionable view that the Athenians were upset about their own (οἰκήια) recent troubles, i.e. the Persian sack of Athens in 480; for this suggestion, see Roisman 1988, followed by Morris 1992: 281–82, also (apparently independently) Badian 1996, who nowhere cites Hdt. 5.97. This interpretation makes very poor sense of Hdt. 6.21, which is clearly intended to show the strength of the Athenian reaction to the fate of Miletus, not to show how sorry the Athenians felt for themselves.

[21] Badian 1971.

fifth-century evidence for the Athenian-Ionian connection, provided that Herodotus' statement of the Athenian motive for punishing Phrynichus is not anachronistic. Such anachronism cannot be ruled out, here or elsewhere in Herodotus' account of the Ionian revolt,[22] but an interesting detail points the other way and suggests that Herodotus was right to stress the kinship factor generally: he says that the Athenian envoy sent to Ionia at the beginning of the revolt (500 BC) was called Melanthios, a name which recalls Melanthus the mythical father of Kodrus whose descendants ruled Ionia.[23] At the beginning and end of the fifth century (Phrynichus' play; Euripides' *Ion*), then, an Athenian tragic playwright explicitly handled the theme of the Athenian 'metropolitan' relationship with the Ionians.

That the emphatic 'Ionianism' of *Ion* reflects the Athenians' pride in their own Ionianism, and simultaneously aims to make the Ionian allies proud of their Athenian descent,[24] might seem obvious and unproblematic: does not Athena predict that Athens' colonists the Ionians, the descendants of Ion's four sons, will 'win glory' (ἕξουσιν κλέος, 1588)? But difficulties arise when we look at other literary evidence not far removed in date. Herodotus appears to say that the Athenians and other Ionians were ashamed of their shared Ionian heritage, and in this he is followed by some modern opinion.[25] What Herodotus actually says (1.143.3) is that 'the other Ionians and the Athenians used to avoid the name Ionian, not wishing to be called Ionian; and even now most of them seem to me to be ashamed of the name'. This is a condensed and difficult sentence. It has been suggested that in the second part ('and even now . . .') Herodotus is correcting a possible misapprehension created by official Athenian promotion of Ionianism. The alleged misapprehension is that 'a number of people, particularly outside the ἀρχή, might think that Athens now exulted in common Ionianism even though she had not done before'.[26] On this interpretation Athenian attitudes were ambivalent:

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[22] For instance, Aristagoras at 5.97.2.

[23] Lewis in Hornblower 1991: 507.

[24] Barron 1964: 35–48 at 48 states categorically that 'the purpose of the play is to make the allies proud of the empire'.

[25] Alty 1982: 1–14.

[26] So Alty 1982: 8, who provides the most careful modern discussion of the passage. Hall 1997b: 54 paraphrases rather loosely: 'in fact, I believe that many of them are ashamed of the name'. This omits what Alty rightly describes as the 'emphatic ἀλλὰ καὶ νῦν'.

official propaganda said one thing, the ordinary Athenian another.[27] So the passage is not very helpful. However, the evidence that the Ionians were regarded with contempt by other Greeks, and that in military contexts at least, Ionianism was not a source of pride, goes wider than this passage.[28] Kleisthenes' replacement of the old four Ionian tribes by ten new ones named after Athenian heroes (Hdt. 5.66) has been seen as the earliest expression of an anti-Ionian attitude at Athens.[29] Perhaps so, but the *Ion* itself, which highlights the old four Ionian tribes rather than the ten newer Kleisthenic ones, shows that Kleisthenes' changes were by no means the end of the story. (Contrast the Demosthenic *Funeral Oration*, which runs through the Kleisthenic tribes and picks out an ennobling exemplum associated with each of the ten eponyms).[30] This highlighting in the *Ion* was not mere nostalgia, although there is indeed epigraphic evidence that the four old tribes continued to matter cultically at Athens as late as the end of the fifth century, associated as they were with the old ritual of the *Synoikia*.[31] In Euripides, the stress on the Ionian tribes may have had a broader imperial implication because those tribe-names survived (admittedly as the names of tribal sub-divisions—usually *chiliastyes* or 'thousands'—rather than actual tribes) in Ionian cities like Miletus and Erythrai.[32] That is, Athena's prediction at the end of *Ion*, that Ion's four sons will colonize Ionia and 'win glory' (1588) is overtly boastful, but is at the same time and in a more subtle way conciliatory, because it refers to institutions effectively discarded, at the political level, at Athens, but still very much alive in contemporary Ionia.[33] After the Sicilian Disaster in 413 some Athenians may have felt that concessions to potentially restless Ionian cities were in order, and Euripides may be voicing some of this Athenian feeling.[34] The difference between conciliation

[27] Alty 1982: 8.

[28] We have seen that the Athenian claim to be colonizers of the Ionians has been read as a denial that the Athenians themselves were Ionians, and if this could be demonstrated, it would be further evidence of anti-Ionianism at Athens. But we have rejected this theory as far as Euripides' play goes; see above pp. 45–6.

[29] Hall 1997b: 54.

[30] Dem. 60.27ff. with Zacharia 2001: 105–6.

[31] Sokolowski 1962 no. 10A lines 31–2 for an old Ionian tribe and trittys.

[32] Jones 1987: 321–23 (Miletus), 304–5 (Erythrai), 312 (Ephesus), 310 (Kolophon). See generally 295. Cf. also 199 for Samos.

[33] For this point see Zacharia 1999: 353, reviewing Lee.

[34] Meiggs 1972: 367–68 suggested that the Athenians were generally inclined to

and assertiveness can however be a fine one: the same act can, especially in a religious-political context, express both moods.[35]

This ambiguity may be relevant to the interpretation of some boundary-markers found in (Ionian) Samos, delimiting the *temene*, 'sacred precincts', of 'Athena who rules Athens' (Ἀθηναία Ἀθηνῶν μεδέουσα), of Ion himself ('Ion at Athens') and of the 'eponymous heroes at Athens', whoever exactly they may be (see below). These Samian boundary-markers form part of a larger group of boundary-markers from several islands;[36] in addition to Ion and the eponymoi, there are precincts of 'Athena', and, from Aegina, of 'Apollo and Poseidon', a very interesting combination on so Dorian an island, because those two gods have Ionian connections.[37] The inscriptions,

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be more conciliatory in the Ionian War period than in the more brutal years before the Sicilian Expedition; he cited for instance *ML* no. 87 (generous Selymbria settlement in 407).

[35] Cf. Parker 1997: 25, discussing the mixture of motives behind Kleomenes of Sparta's attempt to sacrifice on the Athenian acropolis. Kleomenes was rebuffed by the priestess with the words 'it is not permitted for Dorians to enter here', to which he replied 'Madam, I am not a Dorian but an Achaean'. If Kleomenes intended a gesture of conciliation, the priestess took it as assertiveness. It was probably a bit of both. For fluctuating Spartan attitudes to their Dorianism, see Buxton 1994: 146.

[36] IG i^3 1481–99; 1502. The Samian 'boundary of the *temenos* of Ion at Athens' is IG i^3 1496; the editors date this c. 450–440 (i.e. lower than the c. 454 date on which Barron's reconstruction of this and the other boundary-markers depends) and they register Tsakos' even lower date of 440–430 (Ἀρχ. Δελτ. 32A (1977) 75, 78 n. 7). Smarczyk 1990: 58–153 also lowers Barron's date for the whole group of texts; for the Ion inscription in particular see Smarczyk: 133–34. More recent arguments by Mortimer Chambers and others about the date of the Athenian alliance with Egesta, *ML* no. 37, have rendered even more precarious any attempt to assign high dates to inscriptions with the three-barred sigma (this feature was important for Barron's pre-446 dating: Barron 1964: 38–9); see Chambers *et al.* 1990.

[37] For 'Apollo and Poseidon' on Aegina (subjected by Athens in 457), see Smarczyk 1990: 120–29; Parker 1996: 145 and n. 94. Smarczyk 129 thinks the joint cult of Apollo and Poseidon was a local Aeginetan cult adopted by Athenian cleruchs after 431 BC when the cleruchy was sent out. It remains curious and potentially significant that both Apollo and Poseidon, like Ion, have Ionian associations. For Apollo, see above n.1, and for Poseidon Heliconios worshipped at the Panionion, the religious centre of the Ionians at Mykale in Asia Minor, see Wade-Gery, 1952: 64; Barron 1983: 1–12 at 11; Smarczyk 1990: 217 and 369 n. 101. Parker says of the pair Apollo and Poseidon that 'their presumptive patronage of the Delian league while this was still based at Delos [he here refers to Barron 1983] will scarcely help, on the view of the *horoi* taken here', i.e. on the view that the boundary-markers delimit consecrated land, the revenues of which were remitted to the gods and heroes at Athens. But this may pose the issue too starkly: the Athenians could have felt that Apollo and Poseidon were appropriate recipients of *temene* revenues both for the conciliatory reason that their joint cult was already well established on (Dorian) Aegina (Smarczyk: 128 and n. 216) and because Apollo and Poseidon had resonances within the (assertively Ionian) empire. This possibility is acknowledged by

especially the Samian examples, were once seen as evidence of voluntary allied establishment in the 450s of cults which recalled the Athenian colonization of Ionia, and the 'eponymous heroes' were taken to be Ion's four sons.[38] A very different interpretation of these boundary-stones is now current. They are not (it is tentatively suggested)[39] to be seen as traces of a policy of religious conciliation and unity within the empire, and it is even doubtful whether they 'have anything to do with locally celebrated cults at all';[40] in particular the eponymoi are thought to be the ten Kleisthenic tribal heroes rather than the four sons of Ion.[41] Instead, the boundary-stones may have indicated the sites of confiscated land, whose revenues went to the gods and heroes at Athens (a *temenos* can be a long way away from the temple to which it is attached); in other words these inscriptions attest territorial expropriation of a deeply unpopular sort, explicitly renounced by the Athenians when they started a new naval confederacy in the early 370s.[42] But even on the new and bleaker theory it is conceded that on Ionian Samos a cult of Ion, in particular, was an appropriate vehicle for imperial sentiments, and that there would have been 'grim propriety in dedicating land that had been punitively confiscated from rebellious "colonists" to the "hero who symbolized their duties to the native city"'.[43] Questions of collective motive are however never simple; not every Athenian or Samian need have thought that the propriety was grim, and even on the

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Smarczyk 129 n. 219: traditional Ionian and Athenian cult of the two gods may have increased the readiness of the Athenians to take over the *temene* of Apollo and Poseidon which they found in 431. Note finally that Barron's 1983 interpretation of the boundary-stones on Dorian Aegina is different from his 1964 interpretation of the group found mainly on Ionian Samos. His 1983 view is much closer to that of Smarczyk-Parker, see Barron 1983: 10 for 'confiscation and dedication of land'; at p. 12 n. 46 he promised to return to the relation of the Aeginetan inscriptions to those found in Samos and elsewhere, and to 'the significance of the Ionian hands at work on the naming of Apollo and Poseidon'.

[38] Barron 1964: 47.

[39] See the diffident wording of Smarczyk 1990: 152, 'at least an equally valid interpretative possibility' (mindestens eine gleichwertige Interpretationsmöglichkeit), concluding a long discussion. See also Parker 1996: 145, the inscriptions 'may rather record' etc.

[40] Parker 1996: 144–45; Smarczyk 1990: 58–153; Price 1999: 65.

[41] Smarczyk 1990: 138.

[42] Tod 1948: no. 123, lines 35–44.

[43] Parker 1996: 145. For the evidence for and importance of Ion, eponym of the Ionians, within the Athenian empire, see Smarczyk 1990: 360–371. Smarczyk 1990: 134 n. 239 suggests that Ion was particularly appropriate for Samos because of the myth of Samian descent from Ion's descendant Procles (Paus. 7.4.2).

new view Ion may have done double duty, providing a palatable and sentimental means to a harsh and financially exploitative end: conciliation combined with assertiveness. If so, the closing predictions in the *Ion* of Euripides can be interpreted similarly. The Ionians will themselves gain glory, and their retention of the old tribal names is flatteringly alluded to (conciliation); but at the same time the role of Athens as a colonial metropolis is heavily underscored, and this was a power-relationship calling for deference from the daughter-cities (assertiveness). Such ambiguity of presentation will have had a particular attraction for Euripides, on the view of him offered below (ch. 4).

So Kleisthenes' abandonment, for political purposes, of the old tribal names is not conclusive evidence of anti-Ionian attitudes at Athens. But it is only part of the case for thinking that Ionianism was at a discount in classical Athens and that Ionians were regarded with contempt by Athens' enemies. Some passages in Thucydides' narrative[44] certainly imply that Ionian military inferiority to Dorians was a commonly held belief.[45] But it is hard to accept the further conclusions that the Athenians themselves felt inferior and suffered from low self-confidence because they were Ionians, and that because they accepted Dorian superiority they felt unable to 'meet the argument head on by arguing that Ionians were not inferior'.[46] To this argument the *Ion* itself constitutes a powerful reply; it has been rightly objected that there is something wrong with an argument which has to treat the *Ion* as exceptional.[47] Thus it will not really do to say that Athenian plays such as Euripides' *Heraclidae* and *Supplices* do not use the language of Dorians or Ionians, and to relegate *Ion* to a footnote.[48] And in any case the *Ion* does not stand alone: we have seen that the Athenian empire was built on the concept of Athenian-Ionian kinship, though if Thucydides' speeches are anything to go

[44] See esp. Th. 8.25.3, some Argives rush forward in disorder because they were attacking Ionians who (they thought) would not stand up to them; see discussion in Alty 1982: 3.

[45] Modern scholars have sought to explain contempt for Ionians by reference to Ionian failure to resist Persian conquest in the 540s: Rawson 1969: 15–6; Hall 1997b: 54; cf. Alty 1982: 7.

[46] Alty 1982: 9, 11.

[47] The *Ion* supposedly 'exceptional' in its stress on Athens' Ionian nature: Alty 1982: 9 n. 46. But see Price 2001: 154 n. 56, a long and important footnote. For the view here followed see Hornblower 2002: 128–29.

[48] As does Alty 1982: 10 n. 55.

by, this concept might be combined with the idea that Athens' status as mother-city justified coercion of recalcitrant 'daughters'.[49] Colonization often involved violence, as we shall see in another context and another chapter (ch. 3.5, n. 95).

We may conclude that the *Ion* is a strong statement of a proud and well-attested fifth-century Athenian theme, the claim to be the Ionian mother-city of the Ionians, and the play is thus an important document of Athenian imperialism. But the imperialism is not crude, because the four Ionian tribes are not just a way of acknowledging Athens' own Ionian ancestry (see above): they may also have a conciliatory aspect, from the perspective of the potentially dissident and restless East Greeks sitting in the audience, at a tense moment in Athenian imperial history. Nor is the anti-Spartan implication of Athena's closing promise crude either: it is certainly true that by making Dorus and Achaios sons of Xouthos and Kreousa (1590ff.), the play emphasises the superior pedigree of Apollo's son Ion.[50] It has been well said that Athenians will not have 'resented the notion that after conceiving Ion by a god, Kreousa went on to bear Dorus and Achaeus to a mortal . . . Ion's uncle Dorus was thus reduced to his younger half-brother, born of inferior, and, to boot, half-Athenian stock'.[51] But at the same time, the prediction implies that Ionians and Dorians are after all kin, because their eponyms are both children of Kreousa and thus half-brothers. So the fact that there was still a blood relationship between Ion and Dorus in this mythic version may be taken as an indirect attempt to promote Pan-Hellenic unity.[52] As so often in this complex play, Euripides avoids simple answers.

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[49] Thus, to take an extreme case, Thucydides puts into the mouth of an Athenian speaker, Euphemus, the startlingly frank statement that Athenian military reduction of the Ionians and islanders was justified because they had joined the Persians in attacking Athens, their own metropolis, in 480: 6.82.3.

[50] These features assigned to the Dorians fitted quite well with the contemporary situation, in which the Spartans and their allies (e.g. the Corinthians and Megarians), who were Dorian descendants that had settled in the Peloponnesos, presented the greatest danger to the Athenian empire, with which they had already been at war, off and on, for twenty years by the time of the performance of the *Ion*. For attempts to interpret the *Ion* in terms of the political situation, see further ch. 3.3.

[51] Parker 1987: 207.

[52] Or, as Owen notes (xl), there may be a suggestion 'to Dorian states that owing to their origin there was no gross incompatibility in their forming connections with the Athenians'; cf. Lucas p. 70 and see above ch. 1.2.

2.3. Autochthony

2.3.1. *Myths of Autochthony*

The term 'autochthony' covers a wide range of very disparate kinds of mythic themes. Although γηγενής ('earthborn') and αὐτόχθων ('autochthonous') are not synonymous, the latter can be understood as a special case or sub-category of the former.[53] Autochthonous peoples are not only earth-born but have always continued living in the land of their birth. Hence, in order to provide a conceptual context in which both the common and the unique features of the Athenian mythic ideology of autochthony can become clear, it is necessary to discuss briefly the larger category of myths about beings who are 'born from the earth'. They fall into two main categories, universal cosmological myths, and local myths, some of which are more explicitly and obviously political than others. I shall consider universal myths first.

The Earth plays an important role in cosmogonies around the world as an ultimate source for all that is. There are many reasons for this cosmological status; to name but a few, the earth generates vegetal life directly and animal life indirectly and thereby is ultimately responsible for providing food for human beings; its seasons determine the sense of time, especially in agricultural societies, and hence structure the sacred and profane calendars; it forms the foundation on which humans build their homes and cities; and it is to the earth that in many cultures the bodies of the dead are restored. In the Hesiodic cosmology, for example, Earth (Γαῖα) is the primeval mother of the universe (*Theog.* 116ff.). Amongst her various forms of reproduction and numerous children, Hesiod says that a set of valiant warriors literally sprang from the ground 'in gleaming armour, holding long spears in their hands' (*Theog.* 186); these were the Giants, whom the Earth conceived from the bloody drops that fell on the ground when Kronos castrated Ouranos.

With the Argonautic legend we move on to the local category of earth-born myths. The myth concerns another set of *gegeneis* in

[53] On the distinction between *autochthones* and *gegeneis*, see Bérard, 1974: 35; he quotes Brelich's formulation: 'se non ogni γηγενής è αὐτόχθων . . ., ogni αὐτόχθων è, invece, γηγενής' ('if not every γηγενής is αὐτόχθων . . ., every αὐτόχθων is, on the contrary, γηγενής', 1958: 138). On *chthonios*, *gegenes*, see Rosivach 1987: 296 and on *autochthon*, see pp. 297–301.

full armour, but is tied to Colchis on the east coast of the Black Sea. These *gegeneis* were born from the ground of Colchis when Jason, executing the task set him by King Aietes, yoked a pair of fire-breathing bulls, ploughed the ground, sowed the teeth from Kadmos' dragon and overcame in battle the earthborn warriors who then sprang up. He did all this with Medea's help.[54] The Argonautic *Gegeneis* have no cosmological function, so that this myth is evidently different from Hesiod's; nevertheless, closer inspection suggests some surprizing affinities. Both the birth of the Giants and that of the *Gegeneis* of Colchis were the result of an act of violence, the castration of Ouranos in the former case and Kadmos' killing of the dragon in the latter (though this has been displaced onto the Colchian land); they both arose from the ground immediately ready to fight a war in defence of the rights of the pre-existing order, of Ouranos against the usurper Kronos and of Aietes against the intruder Jason, respectively. As we shall see in a moment, the Argonautic myth seems to be closely related in some way to the Theban myth of the Spartoi, for in both cases it is the dragon slain by Kadmos whose sown teeth grow into a crop of armed warriors: Kadmos and Aietes received equal shares of the same dragon's teeth.[55] But it is difficult to interpret the myth beyond this point. For example, whether Hesiod is drawing on orally transmitted Argonautic legends, or whether the myth of the Colchian *gegeneis* in the form in which we possess it has been influenced by Hesiod's epics, or finally whether the two traditions are independent of one another—these are questions that the state of our evidence permits us to pose, but not to resolve. Nor is the political tendency of the myth obvious. Thebes is a Greek *polis*, but Colchis is not itself a *polis* but a large colonial area of mixed Greek and indigenous settlement, where the presence or absence of early Greek-style *poleis* is a matter of scholarly dispute.[56] Colchis was however provided with Greek credentials: the Colchian king Aietes

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[54] Ap. Rhod. *Argonautica* 3.1354–57; cf. the scholium on 3.1372, which suggests that perhaps Apollonius Rhodius took over the story from the early Corinthian epic poet Eumelus (possibly from his *Korinthiaka*), and that the same story was also found in Sophocles' *Colchian Women* (fr. 341 *TGrF*). For valuable discussion of the Argonautic myth, see Braund 1994: ch. 1 'Imagining Georgia in Antiquity'. For an analysis of the similarities between the Theban myth of the Spartoi and the Argonautic myth, see Vian 1963: 164ff.

[55] Braund 1994: 36.

[56] Braund 1994: 87–118.

was inserted into the genealogy of the Corinthian kings, probably by the poet Eumelus,[57] and generally the whole Argonautic legend is a Greek-type myth of foundation.[58] The *gegeneis* in this myth cannot then be dismissed as a fairy-tale from a barbarian wonderland; it surely has some political function. But it is hard to see exactly what that function was. We might be tempted to press the analogy with Kadmos and Thebes, but Theban claims on Colchis are hardly likely. Corinth is a more attractive candidate, because, as we have just seen, there were mythical ties between Corinth and the Colchian rulers. But it takes some ingenuity to explain why the Corinthians should have asserted colonial claims over Colchis; there is little evidence for a historical Corinthian connection with Colchis.[59] (The Black Sea was an area of predominantly Milesian and Megarian settlement). So the Colchian *gegeneis* cannot readily be explained in terms of the politics of any one Greek state.

We are on firmer ground when we turn to the cities of mainland Greece as opposed to colonial Greece. Greek political mythology, and not only in Athens, often located the origins of cities in Earth.[60] The best-known non-Athenian political myth of autochthony belongs to the civic ideology of Thebes. According to Theban legend, a set of fully-grown warriors, the Spartoi ('Sown-men'), sprung from the ground when Kadmos, having gone for water to a local spring, killed the guardian-serpent (an offspring of Ares, according to some variants)[61] and then, on Athena's advice, sowed its teeth. Of the Spartoi

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[57] Cf. n. 54 above, and see Gantz 1993: 340.

[58] Braund 1994: 8.

[59] Braund 1994: 35 thinks that the Corinthians were asserting themselves indirectly in the Adriatic sea.

[60] Apart from the stories of Athens, Thebes and Aigina, which are discussed here, see Aesch. *Suppl.* 250, where Pelasgos, the king of Argos, identifies himself as the son of the earthborn Palaichthon, a name possibly invented by Aeschylus; see Rosivach 1987: 298, nn. 14–5 and appendix on the 'earthborn' Arcadians, pp. 307–8; cf. Aesch. *Sept.* 104, where Ares is called *palaichthon* and the discussion in Vian, 1963: 108. At 8.1.4. Pausanias quotes Asios of Samos, according to whose genealogical poem Pelasgos is the son of Zeus, autochthon and founder of the Pelasgian race; yet the first Argive city was founded by Phoroneus, son of the river Inachos (Paus. 2.15.5). See Paus. 7.18.2 on the foundation of Patrai by the earthborn Eumelus, who is said to have obtained cultivated crops and learnt how to build cities from Triptolemos of Attica, but cf. the Argive version at 1.14.2; see also 2.12.4 on the origin of Phliasia from the earthborn Aras. See Buxton 1994: 190 n. 30.

[61] On the ancestry of the dragon see the discussion in Vian 1963: 106–9, who reviews the variants, with special reference to the scholium at Soph. *Ant.* 126 which

only five survived the mutual slaughter, and it was these five who founded the city of Thebes.[62] The Theban myth of origins seems clearly intended to communicate the military qualities of the newly-born city both to its own citizens and to the whole of Greece.[63]

But not all the earthborn men of Greek legend were armed when they were born, nor did they all have monstrous qualities; another set of *gegeneis* is found in Aigina, where, according to one variant, when Aiakos reached manhood, Zeus, seeing that his son was depressed at being alone on the island, 'raised humans from the ground'[64] to provide him with company. The inhabitants of this island would eventually become sailors and not warriors, so their myth of origins stressed their inventiveness in sailing rather than in war.[65]

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makes the dragon the offspring of Ares and the Erinys Tilphoessa; he concludes that 'L'Arès thébain pourrait donc être une ancienne divinité guerrière et chthonienne, parèdre ou époux de la Terre' ('the Theban Ares then could have been an ancient chthonian divinity of war, co-ruler, or husband of Earth' p. 109).

[62] Apollod. 3.4.1. At Eur. *Bac.* 996, Pentheus is called the son of the earthborn Echion, one of the five surviving Spartoi, founders of the Theban race; the other four Spartoi were Peloros, Oudaios, Chthonios and Hyperenor. A detailed account of the mythical and iconographical variants of the myth is given by Gantz 1993: 467–73; also Vian 1963: 158–71. See also the interpretative analyses of the myth in Buxton 1994: 184–93, who examines the Theban claim to autochthony and observes that the city 'originates *first* from outside [Kadmos comes from the Orient in search of his sister Europa] and *afterwards* from the earth [the Spartoi]' (p. 192). Note also the important remarks on Theban autochthony in Lévi-Strauss 1963: 213 17. For ancient attempts to reconcile the foundation myth of Kadmos and the Spartoi with the completely separate myth of a foundation by Amphion and Zethos, see Gantz 1993: 467, 487.

[63] Given the military qualities of the autochthonous Thebans, it is hardly coincidental that Menoikeus is chosen to be sacrificed for Thebes in Euripides' *Pho.*; see Loraux 1987: 41–2, n. 33, 'Menoeceus dies standing up (*Pho.* 1009, 1091), like a warrior (1001–2)' (n. 58). Note at the same time that the salvation of the Theban race is to be achieved by the sacrifice of an autochthonous male, undefiled by marriage; this is the equivalent of the sacrifice of a city-saving virgin, a theme whose martial and ephebic associations are explored by Kearns 1990: 330. For literary references to the Theban army or the military qualities of the Theban people, see Vian 1963: esp. 168 nn. 3–4. On the mythic counterparts to the military race of the Thebans, namely the Giants and the *gegeneis* of Colchis, the Phlegryans and the Myrmidones, see *ibid.* pp. 168–69.

[64] Paus. 2.29.2; but in Hesiod (fr. 205 MW) it is said that Zeus transformed all the ants into human settlers of both sexes, henceforth known as the Myrmidons.

[65] In the Hesiodic version, the Aiginetans were credited with the invention of sailing boats.

2.3.2. *The Athenian claim to Autochthony*

In the Athenian foundation myth, the claim to autochthony takes the form of a series of successive stages.[66] In the following discussion I shall compare the Athenian autochthony myth with that of some other city-states of Greece, while briefly considering the Athenian king list and the cults on the Acropolis which are associated with the major mythological figures of Athens' foundation, in order to clarify the sophistication and complexity of the Athenian claim to autochthony. The successful resolution of the paradoxes and tensions of the Athenian foundation myth in the figure of Ion will be better appreciated when measured against the preceding unsuccessful attempts.

According to Athenian myth, the first Attic king, Kekrops,[67] stands at the very beginning of the human race; his *diphyes*, 'double-natured' body, only half-human with a snake-tail, indicates that he represents a transition from a fully serpentine to a fully human nature.[68] But though his hybrid form conveys his earthborn origin, he is not explicitly associated with autochthony.[69] His reign is associated with the transition to civilised and order, marked by the founding of the city, the institution of marriage and monogamy, the burial of the dead and the invention of writing; he is also attested as the arbitrator in the contest between Athena and Poseidon over Athens' name and patronage. His tomb is located in the Erechtheion.[70]

Though Kekrops had three daughters (Pandrosos, Herse, Aglauros) and a son (Erysichthon),[71] they all died young and childless. As always, birth from the earth causes difficulties for the continuity of the race; the procreation of future generations, which will go on to reproduce themselves, cannot be accounted for on the basis of such

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[66] Loraux's work on this topic is seminal: 1986, 1993, 2000; see also Saxonhouse 1986; Rosivach, 1987; Thomas, 1989: 217–18, 234.

[67] See, for instance, Hdt. 8.44; Th. 2.15.1.

[68] On the iconographical representations of Kekrops' hybrid form, see Gantz 1993: 236 and n. 16, who, however, also cites a cup in Frankfurt where Kekrops has human feet. In *Ion* 1163–64, Kekrops is portrayed on one of the tapestries in Ion's tent as writhing his coils (σπείραισιν εἰλίσσοντ'); cf. Arist. *Wasps* 438 (Κέκροψ . . . τὰ πρὸς ποδῶν Δρακοντίδη) and Eur. fr. 930 N^2. See also *LIMC* VI 1992: 1084–85, *s.v.* Kekrops.

[69] For the distinction between 'earthborn' and 'autochthonous' see above p. 56 and n. 53. For Kekrops in particular, see Rosivach 1987: 295, 'Cecrops, who was said to be earthborn, was never used to symbolize Athenian autochthony'.

[70] See Kron 1976: 84–103; Parker 1987: 197ff.; Loraux 1992a: 41, 1993: 25–6.

[71] About Erysichthon little is known, apart from his name, see Apoll. 3.14.2; Paus. 1.2.6; see also *LIMC* IV 1988: 18–21, *s.v.* Erysichthon II.

a myth. The eventual birth of Kekrops' successor is described in a complex mythical narrative involving Hephaestus, Athena and Gaia (Earth);[72] even the fate of the Kekropids[73] is intertwined with the birth of Erichthonios, the second earthborn king of Athens.[74] The story in brief, according to most variants, was that Hephaestus pursued the virgin goddess Athena and, failing to seduce her, ejaculated onto her thigh; the goddess wiped the semen away with a piece of wool which she threw onto the ground. As a result, Gaia conceived Erichthonios and, when he emerged from the ground, Athena raised him and placed him in a chest which she handed over to the Kekropids, forbidding them to open it. But the sisters disobeyed Athena's order and opened the chest; one or two snakes that were guarding the infant popped out and frightened the disobedient sisters, who hurled themselves to their death from the Acropolis.[75] The story of the Kekropids has been linked with the festival of Arrhephoria, where once a year two young girls of noble origin complete their year-long priestly service on the Acropolis by descending to a cave near the precinct of Aphrodite and Eros at night, carrying on their heads a covered basket with *arrheta*. They are meant to deposit it there without looking at its contents and then to bring a new basket back to the surface again unopened (Paus. 1.27.3–4).[76]

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[72] For the literary evidence on the birth of Erichthonios, see, for instance, Parker 1987: 193ff.; Loraux 1993: 57ff.; on the relevant iconographical evidence, see Kron 1976: 55–67. See also *Ion* 269–71, where the reference to iconographical representations of Erichthonios' birth (ὥσπερ ἐν γραφῆι νομίζεται, 'as is regularly portrayed', 271) attests the popularity of this theme in the art of the second half of the fifth century BC.

[73] On the Kekropids-Aglaurids, see *Ion* 23–4, 267–74, 495ff.; Apoll. 3.14.6; Paus. 1.18.2. On the fate of the Kekropids, see Parker 1987: 195–97; Brulé 1987: 28–45 (myth, cult, iconography); Gantz 1993: 235–39. On iconographical representations of the Kekropids, see *LIMC* I 1981: 1.283–98, 2.210–16 (*s.v.* Aglauros, Herse, Pandrosos) with addenda at IV 1988: 1.932–3, 2.633; Shapiro 1995: 39–48, remarks that in iconography only after the Persian Wars are the Kekropids linked to Erichthonios' birth (p. 44).

[74] In Apoll. 3.14.5, Paus. 1.2.6, the Parian Marble (*FGrH* 239) and Kastor's list of Athenian kings (*FGrH* 250F4), Erichthonios does not directly succeed Kekrops, but is preceded by the reign of Kranaos, who had three daughters but no sons, followed by the reign of Amphictyon, Kranaos' son-in-law. See Gantz 1993: 234–35, 239.

[75] This version of Erichthonios' birth seems to be followed in *Ion* 267–74; on the guardian snakes, see *Ion* 20–26. According to other variants (see references above n. 72), Athena handed over the chest to Pandrosos and it was her sisters who opened the chest; then, either the snake(s) killed them or Athena drove them mad and they threw themselves from the Acropolis.

[76] On the *Arrhephoria*, see Bousquet 1964; Simon 1983: 39–46. Burkert 1983:

Unlike the myths of origin mentioned above, Erichthonios was not portrayed as fully-grown or fully armed; instead, he was still an infant in need of nurture when he was raised from the ground by Athena.[77] This seems to be a significant difference, for in it one can detect an effort to attribute some sort of role to the female, even if it is only a secondary one.[78] Although it remains true that the birth of the child would not have been possible without 'the masculine desire aroused by the Parthenos',[79] nonetheless Athena's decision to save and nurture the child born from Hephaestus' attempt to rape her is, in its maternal concern on the part of a notorious virgin, somewhat surprizing; presumably the needs of civic ideology, which require that, in some sense, Athena must have a maternal concern for all Athenians, have led to a modification of her personality in this one story; this modification makes good political, if not psychological, sense. Furthermore, since Erichthonios is still an infant and needs to be looked after, he is handed over to the Kekropids who are to act as his nurses, *kourotrophoi*. When they fail to fulfill their duty, Athena herself raises Erichthonios in her own sacred precinct; in

150–54, 1985: 228–29, argues persuasively that the festival is to be understood as a female initiation rite marking the passage to puberty, a theory he first argued in his 1966b article; Robertson 1983, is sceptical of Burkert's interpretation and suggests that the festival deals with the feeding of snakes and with divination; Henderson 1987, at Arist. *Lys.* 641, sides with Burkert, whose interpretation seems by far the more convincing. On the Kekropids' cult on the Acropolis, see Dontas 1983, who, on the basis of a new inscribed stele found in 1980, was able to correct the old view that the Aglaurion was situated on the long north side of the Acropolis and to establish its new location on the eastern part of the Acropolis; see also Larson, 1995: 39–42. On Aglauros' association with the ephebes, see Merkelbach 1972 and Kearns 1990: 323–44 at 330.

[77] Loraux 1993: 61–4 interprets Erichthonios' birth as a 'social birth', since he 'looks more like a young adolescent' in the vase-depictions of this incident; his transition to Athena's arms 'sanctions the beginning of his education' and is taken to indicate Athena's assumption of a 'paternal role' in Erichthonios' birth in this replication of the ceremony of the Amphidromia (above, ch. 1, n. 103), where the virgin πολιοῦχος ('poliadic' or 'city-protecting') goddess of Athens substitutes the father. Shapiro 1998: 133 corrects Loraux by citing the late fifth-century convention of Greek art, whereby infants are portrayed as young adolescents.

[78] In the Athenian foundation myth a conscious effort is made to account for the role of the female without diminishing the military qualities of the Athenian race. On the paradox of the Athenian myth of origins, see Loraux, 1993: 8, 'the same myth marks women with a minus and a "woman-goddess" with a plus. Autochthonous birth does away with the significance of women's maternity, but attributes to Athena (or to the city, in the discourse of the Kerameikos) the roles of nurse, father and mother'.

[79] Loraux 1993: 18.

gratitude for her care for him he later establishes the institution of the Panathenaia to honour the city-goddess.[80] Erichthonios is the king who organizes the Athenian *polis* and introduces civic order.[81] In his reign, Athens leaves the mythic realm of prehistory and passes over into human time. Whereas Kekrops was partly snake, Erichthonios is wholly human,[82] but he too is born from the Attic soil and is still protected by snakes, a motif indicative of his autochthonous origin; he is also the son of the gods.[83] Athenians seem to have constructed a myth of origins that would allow them to denigrate the role of women in the procreation process, but still to claim descent from a female virgin goddess who is made their patron; in other words, to be earthborn and simultaneously to claim divine begetting.

Erechtheus is probably the 'adult double' of the autochthonous' infant Erichthonios,[84] although, in sources earlier than the fifth century, the former is more common. Whatever the earlier variants, Euripides makes Erechtheus the descendant of Erichthonios in *Ion* 267 and each of the two mythical figures brings with him a distinct set of associations. According to the information supplied by this very play, Erichthonios 'sprang from the earth' (ἐκ γῆς . . . ἔβλαστεν, 267) and was raised from the ground by Athena (269–71), who placed him in a casket with two guardian snakes and entrusted it to the Kekropids (21–4; 271); but the maidens opened the chest and met their death by casting themselves from the cliffs of the Acropolis (273–74). Around 422/1 BC, Erechtheus and his daughters were the subject of an earlier Euripidean play, the *Erechtheus*, now surviving only in fragments, according to which the Athenian king sacrificed one of his daughters, as the Delphic oracle ordained, in order to secure victory over the intruder Eumolpus and his Thracian allies;[85] the other sisters, having sworn an oath, sacrificed themselves willingly for the salvation of Athens.[86] In the *Ion*, Erechtheus is said to

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[80] *FGrH* 323a Hellanikos F2, 324 Androtion F2.

[81] See Loraux 1993: 38–9.

[82] Yet in Hyginus, *De Astronomia* 2.13.1–2, Erichthonios is anguiform; see also Apollod. 3.14.6.

[83] See Isocr. *Panath.* 124; Eur. *Med.* 824–26.

[84] Loraux 1993: 24. Parker 1987: 200–1, notes that this is probably a case of 'assimilation followed by re-division of two distinct figures with similar names' (n. 61).

[85] On the Euripidean substitution of Thracian allies for Eleusinian ones, see Parker 1987: 203–4 and n. 68.

[86] For the standard edition of the *Erechtheus*, see Austin 1968, cf. 1967; and for a commentary, see Collard (ed.) 1995: 148–94. On the Euripidean dramatization

have sacrificed all his daughters 'for the [Attic] soil' (πρὸ γαίας)—except Kreousa, who was still a baby in her mother's arms (277–80)—and thereby to have saved Athens from foreign invasion (cf. 721–24). He was subsequently swallowed up by a cleft in the ground struck by Poseidon's trident to avenge the death of his son Eumolpus (281–82; cf. *Erech.* fr. 370.59–60), at a place identified as Μακραί (πέτραι), the 'Long Rocks', which Apollo honours with his lightning (283–85). This outcome once and for all appeases Poseidon, Athena's rival over the patronage of Athens, at the expense of the lives of the Athenian king and his daughter(s). But it means that once again the Athenian throne is vacant.

Most of the later sources name as Erechtheus' successor to the throne Kekrops II, who acts as an intermediary between Erechtheus and Pandion II; the latter is succeeded by Aigeus who is succeeded in turn by his son Theseus, the famous Athenian hero.[87] Yet Euripides chooses an alternative genealogy in the *Ion*, according to which one of Erechtheus' daughters, Kreousa, was spared from the sacrifice of all of her sisters only to be later raped by Apollo, to whom she bore Ion, and to be married to Xouthos, to whom she bore Dorus and Achaios.[88] As the play itself explicitly announces, Ion, the son of Olympian Apollo and of autochthonous Kreousa, will successfully reign over Athens, his name will be famous throughout Greece,

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of virgin sacrifice, the (quasi-) voluntary sacrifice of the Erechtheids and the honours granted to them by Athena for their proven nobility, see Loraux 1987: 43–48; Kearns 1990: 329ff. Connelly, in her ingenious reinterpretation of the Parthenon frieze (1996), argues that the impact of the mythical sacrifice of the Erechtheids for the Attic land was such that it was depicted on the east frieze; and, whereas the Kekropids had separate cult-places on the Acropolis, the Erechtheids were commemorated as Parthenoi in the Parthenon which they shared with the goddess Athena. This attractive theory has generated heated discussion, but is still far from being unanimously adopted.

[87] See the Parian Marble, *FGrH* 239 (3rd century BC), *FGrH* 250 Kastor (1st century BC) F4, Apoll. 3.15.1. For an account of the deeds of these mythical kings of Athens, see Gantz 1993: 247–57.

[88] On the systematised of the mythical tradition and the fabrication of a continuous line of Athenian kings, see Gantz 1993: 233–58. It seems likely that the story of the *Ion* existed as a separate tale, and that when Hellanikos of Lesbos at the end of the fifth century (soon after 404 BC; Th. 1.97) and later Atthidographers (after 350 BC; e.g. Kleidemos, Androtion, Phanodemos, Demon, Melanthios, Philochoros; cf. Paus. 10.15.5) restructured the myths in order to create a unified cycle with an internal chronological coherence matching the chronology of the myths of the rest of Greece, they assigned to Ion the role of a general and an immigrant (Hdt. 8.44; Paus. 1.31.3, 2.14.2) and gave the Athenian throne to the legitimate successors of Erechtheus, namely Kekrops II, Pandion II, Aigeus, and Theseus.

Europe and Asia; his sons will give their names to the four tribes of Attica, and their descendants in turn will colonize the Cycladic islands and Ionia, and be called 'Ionians' after Ion (73–5; 1573–88).

The inherent contradiction of autochthony derives from the tension between the ideologically based need, on the one hand, to establish an initial purely male transmission which secures the exclusion of women from the origins of the city and the common-sense knowledge, on the other hand, that children are the product of the union between a male and a female.[89] In most myths of origins, no effort is made to resolve this contradiction. Even in the myth of Deucalion and Pyrrha where humans were born from the stones the couple threw to the ground, male and female were kept completely separate; from the stones Deukalion threw men emerged, and from the stones thrown by Pyrrha, women were born. Same was born from same.[90] Only in the mythical births of Erichthonios and Ion is there any concession made for the role of the female in the procreation of the autochthonous child. Hippolytus was certainly not the only male Greek to have fantasized that human reproduction really is, or really should be, a matter confined to men, from which women should be excluded (*Hipp.* 616–24);[91] but Euripides was unusual in the degree to which he was willing to expose the folly of such fantasies. Oddly, the ancient biographical reports turned Euripides into an enemy of women—oddly, because he turns out in this play too to be one of the few ancient Greek authors willing to give them their due. Of course, he does not go as far as advocating women's rights at the expense of the male dominated system in society. In fact, male dominance is ascertained in the final speech by Athena, a goddess born from the male without interference of the female: the rape itself is suppressed and there is a clear attempt at exonerating Apollo; and, though Kreousa's voice is heard loud and clear during the course of the play, she now consents to her silence in the future and fully complies to the docile role the male-dominated society has in store for her.[92]

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89 Cf. Lévi-Strauss 1963: 216.

90 Loraux citing Pind. *Ol.* 9; 1993: 85, 87, 214 n. 135.

91 On this passage, see Barrett; cf. also Aesch. *Eum.* 662ff.

92 For a feminist reading of the play, see Rabinowitz 1993: 189–222; she concludes that Euripides 'occupies all the positions, feminine as well as masculine, by seeming to speak for women at the same time that the plays structurally support the dominant sex/gender system' (p. 220).

2.4. Ion

2.4.1. *Repetition and difference*

From the point of view of the Athenian myth of autochthony, the crucial question raised by the figure of Ion in the play Euripides has chosen to name after him is this: why is it Ion who is able to resolve once and for all the fundamental tensions of that myth in a successful way, when the preceding generations had failed to do so and had ended up repeating themselves in a futile succession of false starts and dead ends? Conceptually, of course, Ion resolves the old autochthony contradiction by being at one and the same time autochthonous and the product of a heterosexual union, and thus permits his Athenian heirs to claim that they are the offspring both of Earth (Kreousa's chthonian associations) and of Heaven (Olympian Apollo).[93] But to answer the question in this way is to forget that Euripides has written not a religious treatise but a dramatic play. A truer answer, I would argue, is that in the case of Ion events repeat themselves with a significant difference.

In the preceding section we discussed the various versions of the origin and lives of the autochthonous generations which preceded Ion in the mythic prehistory of Athens. In each generation, the contradictions inherent in autochthony had failed to be resolved, in the sense that characters were indeed born, but could not propagate themselves successfully by creating offspring who would continue their lineage into the future. In this sense, both Kekrops and Erichthonios/Erechtheus are dead ends. A man who is born from the earth alone, without the intervention of a female human mother, can evidently come into existence; he may even be able himself to create children, but his family line is thwarted from progressing beyond the first generation of children.

Euripides uses a series of *mythemes* (mythical elements) familiar to his audience from previous versions of the myth, but he puts them into a different context in this play, one in which they will have a different meaning. No one version of the stories has all these *mythemes*:

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[93] Peradotto 1977: 94 offers a syntagmatic analysis of the Athenian foundation myth (and the successful resolution to the impasse of autochthony with the birth of Erichthonios), as an alternative analytical method to the Levi-Straussian 1963 paradigmatic structural analysis of the Oedipus myth.

instead they must be understood structurally, as constitutive elements which have meaning not in isolation from one another but only as parts of a total structure, in any one example of which most of them will be present. Euripides' purpose in structuring his play by means of the repetition of earlier mythemes is two-fold. On the one hand, in terms of the ideological conception for which his play is a dramatic vehicle, Euripides shows that pure repetition was an *aporia* out of which no path could lead to a viable future, whereas it was only out of repetition with a significant difference that redemption could come about. On the other hand, in terms of the audience witnessing his play, this technique creates expectations which it is precisely Euripides' design to frustrate: his spectators think they know what to expect, for they expect an exact repetition of the story patterns with which they are familiar, but the poet surprises them by setting motifs in new contexts and assigning them unexpected consequences. Ultimately, as a result, the audience too is to learn not to seek exact repetition of the models and traditions with which they are familiar, but to confront honestly the complexity and ambiguity of reality. In this sense, perhaps, we might say that the *Ion* is a tragedy in which the *anagnorisis* of mother and son is designed to lead to an *anagnorisis* among the spectators.

The basic *mythemes* with which Euripides is operating here, and the transformations they undergo in the case of Ion, are the following:

(i) Separation from the earth of Attica and return to it: Kekrops is born out of the Attic soil and is later buried in it (in the Erechtheion); Erichthonios is raised out of the ground by Athena and Erechtheus is swallowed by a chasm in the earth at the stroke of Poseidon's trident; Ion is transported in his birth-basket by Hermes away from the land of Attica—indeed, from the very same cave in which he had been conceived—into the foreign land of Delphi, and once he reaches manhood he is triumphantly restored to the Athenian earth in a procession led by Athena.

(ii) Absence of a mother: no female figure, human or divine, gives birth to either Kekrops or Erichthonios/Erechtheus. And Ion too has no identifiable mother at the beginning of the play, but during its course he is confronted with a whole set of substitute mothers—the Pythia (321), the anonymous Delphian who had left him on the temple-steps (44; 325), the anonymous Delphic maiden with whom Xouthos supposes he might have

had intercourse (550–55)—before finally being introduced to his true mother.

(iii) Snakes: Kekrops, Erichthonios/Erechtheus, Ion, are all said to be autochthonous beings, but one detects a gradual tendency towards increasing rationalised in the way their autochthonous origins are physically portrayed. Kekrops is a snake from the waist down; Erichthonios/Erechtheus is protected by living snakes in his basket; Ion is identified by tokens including golden snake-amulets (24–6; 1427–31). The development from monstrous corporeality to (totemic?) animals to symbolic jewels (still possessed of magical powers) is a remarkable instance of the insistence of the Greek poetic imagination upon limiting the mythic deformation of reality.

(iv) Opening the baby's basket: the Kekropids opened the basket containing the baby Erichthonios, although they had specifically been instructed not to, and they died as a result. But the baby Ion was left by Hermes in front of the temple steps in a half-opened basket at the specific instruction of Apollo so that he could be seen (36–7, 39–40), and was thereby rescued. Ion, after his initial hesitation, opens the cradle with his recognition tokens (1380–88), and the recognition is achieved.[94] Furthermore, the symbolism of open and closed doors, exteriority and interiority, is important throughout the play: for instance, the concealed interior of the temple is never opened, and Kreousa is outside the temple for the whole of the play's action, but at the end of the play she demonstrates her acquiescence in the god's purpose by grasping the ring on the temple door (1612–13).[95]

(v) Caring for the rejected child: Although angered with Hephaestus, Athena nonetheless decides to rescue and nurse the child that grew from his seed, Erichthonios. She now demonstrates her continuing loving concern for the Athenians in the case of Ion. And Ion, although exposed by Kreousa, is rescued and tended, first, by Hermes acting under Apollo's orders and then by the Pythia.

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[94] Lee at 1387: 'history is repeated but with positive results for those who act not out of curiosity but in the conviction that they fulfill the god's own wishes'.

[95] Cf. ch. 1 above, p. 50. Xouthos comes out, but no narrative covers the consultation inside the temple. Again, when the Pythia comes out of the temple door, no information is divulged about the *adyton*. The messenger's speech will divert the interest to a second interior, that of the tent, which he describes in detail.

Ion relates that, having had no mother, he was raised and nourished by the Pythia and the offerings visitors brought to the temple (318–23).[96]

(vi) Death of women: the Kekropids open the basket of Erichthonios and die as a result; Erechtheus sacrifices his daughters in order to secure victory over the Eleusinians. Kreousa is threatened with death by Ion and all the Delphians, but is rescued by Apollo's intervention; in the end, she accepts the spiritual suffering (instead of physical death) she has experienced in these years as a sacrifice for the sake of her city.

(vii) Gradual decrease in the fertility of the Athenian autochthonous line: from Kekrops who had three daughters and a son but all died young without offspring; to Erechtheus with three daughters and no son, who also died without bearing children; to Kreousa and Xouthos who have come to Delphi to inquire into the cause of their barrenness (64–5, 304). The repeated dead-ends which each effort reaches demand a fresh start each time. After three false starts, once Ion has been recognised by Kreousa and reinstated to his rightful place in the Athenian line, there will occur a gradual increase in fertility: Kreousa will bear two further sons to Xouthos, while Ion himself will have four sons. No daughters are further produced. Perhaps it is significant that in the happy outcome, two female virgins—the Pythia and Athena—play a decisive role.

In no single story do all these elements appear in the same order, and only in the story of Ion do they all appear. Hence, on the one hand, Ion's story seems to be a thesaurus of the whole mythic prehistory of Athens, in which all the scattered elements in the generations preceding him are finally brought together coherently and illuminate one another. But, on the other hand, the audience are constantly kept on their toes: for the spectators see familiar elements in strange settings and unfamiliar elements in accustomed settings. And, at the moment the spectators come to terms with the innovations Euripides announces in the prologue of the play, he surprises

[96] On the recurrent references to τροφή in the *Ion*, see Loraux 1993: 186 n. 8; cf. also Zeitlin 1996: 295 n. 27. On the emphasis to specific parts of the female body that relate to the care for the exposed male infant, i.e. the breasts and arms of the mother, and the elision of the assaulted, suffering body of the mother, see Rabinowitz 1993: 211.

them once again by setting his action in a new direction: the recognition between mother and son takes place in Delphi and not in Athens; Hermes, the Pythia, the sacred dove and Athena are all called in to complete Apollo's rescue mission of Ion; both the chorus break their pledge of silence and Kreousa in a monumental monody utters her accusations against her divine assailant with impunity; Kreousa and Ion are told to conceal the truth from Xouthos for the sake of the royal autochthonous line of Athens; and it is prophesied that Kreousa will bear Dorus and Achaios to the noble immigrant Xouthos, as the new half-brothers of Ion, in what amounts to an effective rewriting of earlier mythical versions.[97]

2.4.2. *Athenians and Foreigners; Ion and Xouthos*

In this section we will look at the character portrayal of Ion in this play and offer a reading on the particular choices Euripides makes in his 're-mythicizing'[98] of the Athenian autochthonous myth with respect to the figures of Ion and Xouthos. In this play, a humanization of Ion occurs in two dimensions: what we might call, a diachronic and a synchronic. Diachronically, Ion represents a transformation of the mythic non-humanity of preceding generations into something on a more recognizably historical, human scale. And, synchronically, Ion stands in the middle between Kreousa's desperate emotionality and Xouthos' superficially rationalistic skepticism; Ion represents a mean of civilized humane concern which he almost violates by wanting to murder Kreousa, but to which he is enabled, by the intervention of Apollo, to return at the end.

Diachronically, the generations preceding Ion are portrayed in this play as being full of creatures many of which were not wholly human and some of which were monsters. Thus Kekrops was half-human and half-snake and was born from the ground. And even when the physical shape of Ion's ancestors was not monstrous, their actions were often inhuman: Erechtheus, for instance, killed his own daughter(s). But in the generations preceding this play, monsters are not confined to the family of the rulers of Athens. The mythical panels which the chorus admire on the temple of Delphi show the Olympian gods and Greek heroes subduing monstrous enemies (190–218);

[97] See Cole 1997 with n. 1 above; see also above 2.2.
[98] Term borrowed from Cole 1997: 88.

Kreousa receives from Erichthonios two drops of the Gorgon's blood which were given to him by Athena (999–1003). In the dramatic present, on the other hand, all the monsters seem to have disappeared—when Kreousa is called ἔχιδνα, 'viper', this is a common metaphor for a treacherous woman; Ion also invokes the image of the Gorgon (1261–67) which brings in 'some of the misogyny and ambivalence associated with that figure'.[99]

Indeed, in the enlightened present of the play, even deeply cherished beliefs of the Athenians concerning their city's mythic prehistory can be held up to skepticism: Xouthos says that the earth bears no children (542), and Ion suggests in one passage that human maidens are not really raped by gods, but use this story as a pretext to cover up their love affairs with other mortals (339–41; cf. 1521–27), and, in another, that, if the gods have indeed raped mortal women, they should be required to pay a penalty for their crime as any human offender would be (444–51). The shift from a non-human past to a human present is made strikingly obvious by Euripides' handling of his divine characters: Apollo is never seen by anyone; Hermes is seen only by the audience; and when Athena appears to Ion and Kreousa, they are terrified by the eruption of a divine presence into their human world and must be reassured of Athena's kindness and benevolence (1550–54). With the generation of Ion, we have entered the contemporary historical world: the mythic has been brought up to date; 'Erechtheus is restored to youth' (1465).

Synchronically, Ion occupies a middle space between the two extremes represented by Kreousa and Xouthos. The former is self-absorbed because consumed by the blind passion of a victim, the latter is self-absorbed because deluded by the superficial rationality of a victor. Ion shows a combination of rational thinking and humanity in his conversations with Kreousa and Xouthos. When he first meets Kreousa he is concerned about her state of mind, for she approaches the temple of Apollo with tears in her eyes (241–42). In the ensuing stichomythia, a mutual sympathy is soon established between the motherless child and the childless mother (307, 312, 320). But, when Kreousa reports the story of her alleged friend, whom, she claims, Apollo raped, the pious temple servant rejects the allegation (341); and, after a careful investigation of the matter,

[99] DuBois 1988: 93; see also Lee at 1262.

during which we see his rational thinking at work, Ion objects to Kreousa's intention to question Apollo about a story the god wishes to keep secret (365). Even after his recognition scene with his mother, Ion's rationality takes over and he shows the same desire to investigate the truth (1521ff.). But during the course of the play, Ion runs the risk of losing his combination of rationality and humanity: he is tempted to become murderous when Kreousa tries to kill him (1261ff.), and later to doubt Apollo's paternity (1537; 1546–48); but in the end he returns to his true self by the intervention of Apollo's agents, Pythia (1320) and Athena (1553ff.).

Xouthos is the dupe foreigner, who takes Apollo's oracle at face value and is so pleased at finding a son that he does not ask the god about the identity of the mother of his newly found son. It is Ion who first addresses the question and suggests that perhaps his mother was γῆ, 'earth'; Xouthos, who reasons rationalistically, dismisses Ion's mythological interpretation of events and in half a line contests the whole autochthony myth of the Athenian race, claiming that the ground (πέδον) bears no children (542). At the end of a passage of vigorous questioning, Ion concludes that he must have been conceived on a day when both of his alleged parents were in a state of intoxicated ecstasy as participants in the Bacchic mysteries on Mt. Parnassos (553–54). He is however still unaware of the identity of his mother, whom he longs more than ever to behold (563–65). But Xouthos is not prepared to dawdle on a futile search for Ion's mother (572–75); for him, there are other more pressing matters, and in particular his son's accession to the Athenian throne (576–81). Ion's reason restrains his emotion. Although he is pleased at having discovered his father, he carefully measures the possible consequences of his arrival at the autochthonous Athenian polis as Xouthos' heir and anticipates the hostility of all political factions towards the illegitimate son of a foreigner who aspires to become influential. He contrasts the autochthonous Athenians (τὰς αὐτόχθονας κλεινὰς Ἀθήνας οὐκ ἐπείσακτον γένος, 589–90) with his own status as an illegitimate son of a foreigner (πατρός τ' ἐπακτοῦ καὐτὸς ὢν νοθαγενής, 592) and fears that stained with this double stigma, he will be considered an intruder in the land of earth-born Athenians (593–606).

Metics in fifth-century Athens serve in the army, but they are not to be entrusted with high-ranking office.[100] Yet, Xouthos, a merce-

[100] For Xouthos as metic, see Vidal-Naquet 1997: 116.

nary of the legendary past—noble, but of foreign origin—arrives as an ally to Athens and subdues Euboia (59–61; 296–97); as a result of his victory he receives Kreousa, the Athenian princess, as his wife (62; 293), and her dowry as a prize of war and a meed of valour (298). Still, he is never fully integrated into the Athenian city-state (οὐκ ἀστός, 290), but always remains in the marginal category of the foreigner (63–4 with Lee; 290–98). And yet, he himself is oblivious to the limitations of his status. His moral and behavioural code is that of the mercenary warrior;[101] he knows no country, and, just like Jason in the *Medea*, wants to secure the status of his house in society by any means available to him, making hardly any allowances for Kreousa's emotions (657–60). He is the selfish male, whose arrogance violates the sanctity of the household, just as his foreign status violates the purity of the autochthonous Athenian race.

Xouthos is confident he can outmaneuver Kreousa and the Athenians, though he plans to wait and cease the right opportunity, not wishing to hurt his childless wife's feelings (657–60). Ion is hesitant due to the anticipated difficulties of his arrival in Athens; he is fully aware of his foreign status (592, 607), but also feels he has to give weight to Kreousa's emotions, foreseeing the bitter resentment the childless step-mother is likely to develop for him (608, 613). Ion's humane character enables him to see things from Kreousa's vantage point and to voice arguments the Athenian queen might have employed had she been called to comment on the situation. Once she had a common fate with Xouthos,[102] but now she is left

[101] The mercenary warrior, who is a feature of the fourth century BC and later, is already present in the Peloponnesian war; see Th. 1.115.4, 3.34.2 for ἐπίκουροι and ἐπίκουρος in *Ion* 297. But in the case of Xouthos, as Loraux 1993: 203 succinctly puts is, 'at Kreousa's hearth, Xouthos is what, in a normal situation, a woman is at the hearth of her husband: an element introduced from outside. Yet, in her own house, he has turned Kreousa into a kind of war-captive, the booty of a victorious warrior'. See Saxonhouse 1986, *passim*, on the exclusiveness of the autochthony myth and the limitations the male arrogance of Xouthos and Apollo impose.

[102] Kreousa uses plural or dual forms when referring to her childlessness in relation to Xouthos. See 304: ἄπαιδές ἐσμεν, 'we are childless', and, 406: ὅπως νῷν σπέρμα συγκραθήσεται, 'how the seed of the two of us will be mixed together'; see also, 748–49. But, when she refers to her relation to Apollo she uses a language of disjunction, separating herself from her divine seducer (358, 386; also 904, 916, 965). Hermes, in the prologue, uses a language of disjunction when referring either to Kreousa's relation to Apollo (49–50), or to the childlessness of Kreousa and Xouthos (64–5). Finally, Kreousa's dual form (νῷν, 406) is counteracted once again by the dissociation of Kreousa and Xouthos in the report of Trophonios' oracular response (οὐκ ἄπαιδά με ... οὐδὲ σ', 'neither would I be childless ... nor would you',

to bear the bitterness of her misfortune alone, having no share in her husband's good fortune.[103] Ion's compassionate reaction (618–20) recalls his earlier response at the report of the story of Kreousa's fictional friend (355). Even when Ion, in his effort to convince Xouthos to allow him to remain in Delphi, cites the threat scorned women may pose to their husbands (616–17 with Lee), he still feels pity for Kreousa growing old without a child (618); Ion's empathetic reaction here is in resonance with his earlier reaction at the queen's first appearance. When Ion first hears from Kreousa that the royal couple has come to Delphi to inquire about their childlessness (note Kreousa's plural at 304), he focuses upon Kreousa's misfortune, as if such a calamity had a greater impact upon her, who is noble and of autochthonous origin (293), than upon Xouthos, who, though of a good pedigree, is a foreigner. Ion, in this earlier instance, concludes that Kreousa, though fortunate in her noble origins, is ultimately unfortunate (307). And again later, for Ion, who values both Kreousa's feelings and her autochthonous origin, childlessness is an undeserved affliction for the noble (619–20). Is it, perhaps, because Ion understands that if Kreousa cannot have an heir, then the house of the Erechtheids is doomed? If the thought of 619–20 is seen in this light, it may be interpreted as something like this: 'it is not fair that barrenness should befall a noble line'. How else could we account for the fact that Kreousa is not merely called εὐγενής, but, rather, the offspring 'of noble fathers' (πατέρων ἀπ' ἐσθλῶν)?[104] This phrase introduces, indirectly, the theme of paternal heredity, which is going to be further highlighted in the ensuing episode, when Kreousa takes on the role of the defender of the Erechtheid *oikos*, and contemplates the retaliation for her husband's offensive trespassing.

408–9). On Kreousa's peculiar relation to 'the masculine principle', see Loraux 1993: 216–20.

[103] See the chorus' remark on the lack of sharing in good fortune, ἡ μὲν ἔρρει συμφοραῖς, ὁ δ' εὐτυχεῖ, 'she is ruined by the turn of events, but he is happy' (699). What in Ion's speech is a mild reprimand for Xouthos' lack of consideration for his childless wife, in the old tutor's interpretation (813–14) becomes a calculated reaction on Xouthos' part; in this reading, Xouthos chooses not to share Kreousa's unfortunate barrenness and decides to get himself a heir from his union to a slave-girl: οὐκ ἔστεργέ σοι ὅμοιος εἶναι τῆς τύχης τ' ἴσον φέρειν, 'he scorned to be like you and share your fate' (817-18).

[104] On the meanings of εὐγενής, 291, ἐγγενής, 293, see Loraux 1993: 202–3, and n. 77: '*eugenes* refers to good birth, *engenes* to autochthonous birth: in Athens the two terms are, and have to be, interchangeable'. For autochthony as democratic nobility see Thomas 1989: 217.

Xouthos is oblivious to the nobility of autochthony and the gravity of the matter for the Athenian royal line. His plan is to initially introduce Ion into the royal palace as a guest and eventually make him the successor to the throne (654–58).[105] The only allowance he is prepared to make is to postpone the revelation of his son's identity, until the time is ripe for him to persuade Kreousa to relinquish the sceptre of the land to Ion (659–60). But how could Xouthos, the mercenary warrior, lay claim to the throne of the Erechtheid palace for his son begotten by another woman?[106] Xouthos has no concern about the legitimacy of Ion's intrusion; after all, he is an intruder himself (cf. 813–14). But now he ventures even further; he aims at giving to his son something that is his own, yet he has no authority to pass it on to his own son: προσάξομαι δάμαρτ' ἐᾶν σε σκῆπτρα τἄμ' ἔχειν χθονός, 'I shall induce my wife to allow you to inherit my rule over the country' (659–60). The actual wording reveals that Xouthos is in fact aware of the limitations of his status in the Athenian palace; but he is determined to secure for his son the material wealth and power he earned in war at all costs.[107]

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[105] Compare Xouthos' language of disjunction with the language used by the other characters of the play; see above nn. 102 (Kreousa), 103 (chorus, old tutor).

[106] For the legal position see Burnett 1971: 106 n. 6, with the improvements of Loraux 1993: 202–5 and Lee on 71–3. Kreousa is, in fifth-century Athenian legal parlance, an *epikleros*, an heiress whose father is dead and who has no brothers and as yet no son. As such she will be able to transmit property to legitimate children; but not to Ion as her illegitimate son. The status of Ion, whose Erechtheid rights do of course derive in fact from Kreousa, must therefore be concealed (1601), and he must be passed off as the natural son of Xouthos, and claim the succession from his father with Kreousa's consent. Apollo needs Xouthos to believe that Ion is his own, Xouthos' son, so that Xouthos will have a motive for persuading Kreousa to have the child legitimized. Xouthos' position is to that extent precarious and dependent on Kreousa's goodwill, so that he must use the language of 'inducing' Kreousa to co-operate; see below n. 107 and Lee at 659–60. The situation is peculiar in that Xouthos, as a foreigner, was an abnormal husband for an *epikleros*; see Loraux 1993: 203 and n. 80: normally an *epikleros* should be claimed in marriage by the closest relative of her dead father. In all this, the much greater peculiarity of Ion's Apolline paternity means that there is a point beyond which a literal-minded legal interpretation cannot be pressed: we are not dealing with a forensic speech by Isaios.

[107] Note how much more active Xouthos' interest is here, χρόνωι δὲ καιρὸν *λαμβάνων* προσάξομαι, 'in time I shall grasp the opportunity to induce . . .' (659), when compared to his reluctant consent to carry out an investigation in order to find the identity of Ion's mother; χρόνωι δὲ *δόντες* ταῦτ' *ἴσως* εὕροιμεν ἄν, 'if we give it time we may possibly find her' (575). Compare, also, the mood of the verbs; at 659, he uses future indicative in first person singular, whereas, at 575, he used aorist optative in first person plural. In the former he displays his strong personal interest in achieving his aim; in the latter he appears indifferent to the outcome of the search.

Xouthos earlier dismissed one of the main tenets of the Athenian autochthony myth, namely birth from the earth (542). Here, he skims over the complications Ion's arrival at Athens entails. By rationalizing the autochthonous claims of the Athenian royal line, Xouthos disregards the autochthony myth itself as well as the limitations its claims to exclusivity impose; it remains for Kreousa to be persuaded that in the absence of an heir, Xouthos' illegitimate son makes the best available solution for the Athenian royal family.

From the point of view of the Athenian male spectator, both Kreousa and Xouthos are outsiders, the former as a woman (though she is Athenian), the latter as an Achaean (though he is a man). Ion is in between the two, occupying the ideological centre with which the audience are encouraged to identify themselves. From this perspective, both Kreousa and Xouthos can be seen as representing potential dangers. Kreousa shows the dangers Athenian men always associated with women: they are irrational, emotional, violent, treacherous, likely to kill. The Athenian queen fulfills all these preconceptions during the course of the play, but then at the end gives them the lie. Xouthos shows all the defects Athenian men always associated with foreigners: they are gullible, vain, and wish to appropriate for themselves Athenian valuables like rule and women. Xouthos seems to fulfill all these preconceptions not only during the course of the play, but also at the end. Athena orders Ion and Kreousa to leave Xouthos in a state of happy delusion (1601–3), thus providing a divine sanction for the deception of the foreigner. Yet, nonetheless, Xouthos will be admitted into the Athenian royal line and will produce a κοινὸν γένος, a 'common offspring', with Kreousa (1589ff.). Though Xouthos remains a foreigner, he is ultimately integrated into the Athenian future.

2.5. Kreousa, the Kekropids, and Virgin Sacrifice

2.5.1. *Repetition and Difference*

In the following section, I shall suggest that in Kreousa's key dramatic utterance in this play, her monody, the story of the Aglaurids and the ritual of the Arrhephoria are unmistakably evoked. If this is so, it might seem odd to modern readers that even this highly emotional song should go out of its way to recall some earlier episodes

of Athenian mythic prehistory. My thesis is that the monody is a quasi-ritual re-enactment of the mythical crime of the Kekropids, a 'repetition with a difference' that makes it possible for Kreousa's story to be ultimately successful and 'redemptive' rather than a catastrophic failure.[108] Kreousa is not providing objective mythological information, she is not writing a treatise on Greek religion. Instead, like any Athenian, she is trying to understand her own experience in terms of the mythic models provided her by the storehouse of Athenian folk wisdom. As it turns out, her actions will perform a repetition of some of those models—but with a highly significant difference. In that regard, she is like Ion: after all, the two are perfect complements for one another.

The basic *mythemes* employed in the course of Kreousa's monody are the following:

(i) Female rejection of violent male sexuality: Hephaestus tries to violate Athena and ejaculates onto her thigh; in disgust she wipes off his semen and throws it onto the ground. Apollo violently rapes Kreousa while she is picking flowers; she exposes the product of their union and for many years she continues to hate her divine seducer.

(ii) Concealment, Enclosures and Darkness: The Kekropids are instructed not to meddle with the secret contents of the basket committed to them. The Arrephoroi, following a similar instruction, descent to an underground space and undergo their ritual initiation at night.[109] Kreousa is violated in the dark enclosure of the cave and keeps her darkly union secret (860–61).

(iii) Female *akrasia*, lack of self-control: The Kekropids cannot resist their curiosity to find out what is hidden in the covered basket Athena entrusted them with. Kreousa can no longer conceal her rape by Apollo (874), though she was meant to remain silent (869). The chorus break their silence and reveal the god's oracle and Xouthos' secret plotting to their mistress and Kreousa

[108] Loraux 1993 and Zeitlin 1996 have written about ritual backgrounds but have not made any use of Kreousa's monody for their readings. LaRue 1963, Barlow 1986 and Gibert 1995 have developed related theses about the monody but have different take or no take for its ritual significance. Gibert 1995: 177, for instance, says no more than that the story of the Kekropids is 'an important paradigm' for Kreousa.

[109] See below n. 136.

breaks her long-kept silence with her monody and unleashes an attack against her divine seducer and her husband. The chorus comment that Kreousa has opened a *thesauros* of evils (923–24). The Pythia, unlike the Kekropids, keeps the basket closed; but at the right time it is opened by a man (Ion) to bring about the recognition of mother and son (1387).[110]

(iv) Punishment for female *akrasia*: The Kekropids paid for their insubordination with their blood and physical death (274); Kreousa, suffers spiritual turmoil and sheds tears for failing to recognize Apollo's long-term providence (876; 1458–59) and is nearly killed for taking matters in her own hands.

(v) Compliance with Athena's orders: the Kekropids disobey Athena and open the basket containing Erichthonios. Kreousa is overcome by her emotional suffering and reveals her secret union with Apollo, but invokes Athena, in the hope of enlisting her benevolence and ward off Apollo's reprisals (871–73 with Lee). The city-goddess appears at the closing sequence and orders Kreousa to conceal the truth from Xouthos promising her respite from suffering and a blessed fate (1603–5).

Kreousa has a strictly defined sense of justice and of the reciprocal obligation of *charis*, to which she gives expression in her attack upon Apollo in the monody, as we shall see in the next section. But this is a desire for a precise repetition; the lesson she must learn is to accept repetition with difference, if redemption is to come about.

2.5.2. *Kreousa's Monody: A Reading*

Kreousa's monody coheres perfectly with her dramatic character and the themes and concerns of the play and serves to advance the dramatic action by preparing for the turn of events that is about to occur. Kreousa accuses her divine seducer of negligence, indifference and ingratitude, and though the monody is factually mistaken (with respect to Ion's fate), her passionate outburst is so enthralling that we can hardly resist it. As in Mozart's *Magic Flute*, where the Queen of the Night sings an unforgettable aria about the loss of her child (who though is alive), the audience are taken in by the refined song and empathize with the suffering Queen. It takes a great dramatist

[110] See Lee, p. 31 n. 80.

to seduce the audience and Euripides has done so brilliantly in Kreousa's monody. At the same time, by endowing the female victim of a divine seducer with one of the most exceptionally poignant and compelling voices in Greek tragedy, he performs a typical Euripidean act of bringing the gods down to earth. The presentation of Apollo's impregnation of Kreousa as a rape has no real ancestor;[111] in Greek myth, it is routinely considered a privilege for a mortal woman to be chosen for procreation by a god, and it usually improves her marriageability and fertility. A more detailed analysis of Kreousa's fascinating monody will render some revealing results that will enhance the understanding of the play as a whole.

A substantial amount of dramatic time has elapsed since Kreousa's last spoken words (797–99). The dramatist has carefully built up suspense by arousing the audience's interest. As she unburdens herself of her long-kept secret, Kreousa sings one of the most polished of all Euripidean monodies. The choice of this type of communicative vehicle for transmitting the long-awaited detailed description of the key event of the prehistory of the drama, namely Kreousa's encounter with Apollo, is intriguing. The monody is not oriented towards the listener, be it the old man and the chorus who are present with her and witness this outburst, or Apollo, whom she addresses in his absence in the second part of the song (881–82), or, indeed, the external audience. Rather, the song's orientation is towards its sender, for it is her own soul that Kreousa addresses at the very beginning of her ode (859). This device of splitting the dramatic character into two different subjects provides a convenient justification for the dramatic convention of making her thoughts public. At the same time, it helps maintain in our minds the sense of her spiritual isolation from her social world as a result of the news she has just received concerning her perpetual childlessness (761–62). Childlessness means she has no place in society—her isolation from the other characters on stage during the course of the monody is a dramatic expression of a social fact.

The weight of Kreousa's first words, after a dramatic silence lasting sixty lines, is emphasised metrically by a series of long syllables, verbally by the choice of a phrase that alerts the audience to the

[111] Dunn 1990: 132 remarks that 'the emphasis upon Kreousa's rape as an act of violence is unprecedented in Greek tragedy. Sympathy for the victim is equally rare'.

imminent breaking of her silence—πῶς σιγάσω? 'how am I to keep silent?' (859) is a rhetorical question which looks backwards to her silence hitherto and forwards to the fact that it is about to come to an end—and semantically by a self-apostrophe (ὦ ψυχά, 'my soul!').[112] Kreousa, by addressing her soul, makes it real, gives it a vital dramatic presence. To this moment, she is the only figure who has ever paid any attention to her soul. Neither her father nor her husband or her divine seducer seem ever to have cared about her true inner feelings and emotions. She was treated as an object of exchange designed to seal the alliance between her father Erechtheus and her foreign husband, who helped the Athenians win the war over the Euboeans; she was the reward Xouthos received for his services to Athens.[113] Her body, the body of the king's daughter, was exchanged to secure the safety of the political body of Athens.[114] Her body was used by Apollo to serve a similar function, i.e. for the profit of the polis, by sowing it with his offspring to secure the continuation of the Athenian autochthonous race and the survival of the Erechtheid house. In the former case Kreousa honoured her father's agreement with his ally, for so long as her husband treated her well. In the latter case, she was never given the benefit of knowledge, but kept her bitter intercourse with Apollo secret, doing honour not to the god, but to her father (14, 340) and mother (897).

Kreousa takes on the role of the object of exchange in male transactions and allows her soul to be marginalized as long as she finds motives for concealment. But now that she feels betrayed by both her mortal and immortal lovers, it is only a matter of time before she refuses this role and 'attempt[s] to position herself as a subject';[115] what was driven away to the margin returns to take on a force of its own.[116] For a moment Kreousa hesitates as to whether she should speak (859) or remain silent (860–61), but the very fact

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[112] For similar examples of address to one's soul or heart, see Lee at 859. The ultimate model is Homeric, e.g. *Odyssey* 20.18–22 with Rutherford 1992.

[113] See 59–64; 290–98; esp. γάμων Κρεούσης ἀξίωμ' ἐδέξατο, 'Xouthos was given the honour of marriage with Kreousa' (62); φερνάς γε πολέμου καὶ δορὸς γέρας, 'gaining my dowry as a reward for fighting in the war' (298).

[114] For the idea that the bodies of women are used as a currency of exchange between different groups of men to secure their interconnection, see Lévi-Strauss 1969: 480–496; Girard 1977: 223–49; and, more recently, on the traffic of women in Greek tragedy, see Rabinowitz 1993 and Wohl 1998.

[115] Wohl 1998: xv.

[116] This is what Freud 1940 would term 'a return of the repressed'. See also Hoffer 1996: 303ff.

that after a silence of sixty lines she has now spoken these words functions dramatically as a signal that it will not be long before she will allow her soul to give voice to her emotions, to cry out in public the sufferings of a victimised woman in a world dominated by males who have inhibited her speech so far.[117] Her *aporia* as to whether she should bring to light her dark wooing[118] and put aside her shame is quickly overcome. She has been silenced so far partly because it was part of her social role as a respectable woman to be silent in public, partly because of her inner sense of αἰδώς, shame.[119] Yet now, at the climax of her desperation, she longs for her voice in order to relate her long-kept secret tale of her rape, in the hope for justice.[120] As she unleashes her female attack against the males who have betrayed her, she appropriates a male language, Apollo's own song, reversing it from hymn to curse.[121]

The dramatic significance of Kreousa's monody at this middle point of the play is considerable. The view that the monody is a non-actional soliloquy that suspends the πρᾶξις, the development of the plot, and has a merely reflexive quality soon to be dispensed with in the ensuing action,[122] fails to do justice to the nexus of the-

[117] The function of the intoductory question (859) is rhetorically even more complex, because the very fact of uttering it already breaks the silence; it is almost a performative question.

[118] Kreousa's εὐναί were σκότιαι both because Apollo literally took Kreousa into a cave and therefore the encounter took place in the dark, and figuratively, because the encounter led to an illegitimate offspring. For more examples of the latter, more pertinent nuance of the adjective σκότιαι, namely illegitimacy, see Biehl at 860–61.

[119] Cf. ἄκουε δὴ τὸν μῦθον· ἀλλ' αἰδούμεθα, 'hear the story; but I am ashamed', 336. See also αἰδούμεθ' εὐνάς, 'I respect our marriage' 977; αἰσχύνεται, 341, for the shame felt towards men; μή τιν' αἰσχύνην λάβω, 'so that I incur no disgrace', 395, Kreousa's request to Ion for silence about her friend's tale, so that her husband does not get the wrong impression. On the meaning of αἰδεῖσθαι and αἰσχύνεσθαι, see Barrett 1964 on *Hipp.* 244. On women feeling ashamed to tell their 'maladie de l'âme', see Segal 1988: 56, 71 n. 12, on *Hipp.* 293–96.

[120] Phaidra in *Hipp.* 393–97 goes through the different courses of action she considered before concluding that the best solution was to commit suicide; the first option she turns down is silence and concealment and the second is fighting against her passion. Kreousa considers silence (859) and concealment (860–61), but decides in the end to communicate her misery to the old man and the chorus, perhaps hoping in so doing to fight actively against it; committing suicide is not an option considered by the Athenian queen. The selected course marks a movement from private to public discourse, from enclosure within the soul to disclosure outwards into the open theatrical space.

[121] On Kreousa's monody as the reversal of a hymn, see LaRue 1963: 126–36; Loraux 1993: 191–93 and n. 33.

[122] Wolff, 1965: 180–81, sees in Kreousa's monody 'the most striking juxtaposition of detachment and involvement, of the stasis of the description and the pathos

matic and dramatic relationships brought into focus in the brief span of this lyrical soliloquy. More specifically, we are invited to hear for the fourth time the story of Kreousa's rape by Apollo;[123] only this time we are presented with a more elaborate account of the actual scene of rape as viewed from the victim's vantage point. We witness Kreousa re-living her nightmarish experience in front of our very eyes. Such repetition and re-enactment contributes to maintaining Kreousa's dramatic identity, conforming with and, indeed, expanding the perspective attached to her figure. Kreousa, while remaining completely immersed in the situation that she hopes to change by speaking, she performs a speech-act that alters the relationships between the dramatic characters and results in the change of the play's direction towards violence, as shown with the ensuing plotting and assassination attempt against Ion. And in so far as the dialogue parts following the prologue dramatised the process by which Kreousa was led to reveal her dark secret, this monody represents a climax in the texture of the play.[124]

Kreousa's outburst in her monody coheres perfectly with her dramatic character: it manifests her dispositions in her words and prepares the ground for her subsequent actions. Apollo is portrayed as having raped and abandoned the frightened virgin princess, showing no respect for her feelings and no compassion for her suffering (905–15); Kreousa also accuses him of unfairness for letting their son perish and for granting a son to her husband alone to whom he owed nothing (912–18). Although Kreousa's actions fall under the category of compulsion since the initiative lies only partly with her, this does not make her any less sympathetic to the audience, who are invited by the detailed account of the divine assault to be drawn into her situation and to feel compassion for what for Kreousa is unjustifiable divine neglect (she has not heard Apollo's explicit admission of concern for his child, reported to the spectators by Hermes in the prologue); without this monody, Kreousa's subsequent actions

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of human feelings'. On soliloquies of action and reflection, see Pfister 1988: 136–37.

[123] Kreousa's story is referred to several times in the course of the play: 8–18, 338–62, 492–508, 891–901, 936–965, 1479–87, 1560–62, 1595–1600. We have been told that as a virgin (e.g. 23, 26, 503–4) she was violently assaulted by the god (10–11, 437, 445, 506; cf. also 934–45); but most of the information about the actual rape scene is given in Kreousa's monody. See Wolff 1965: 170–71; Burnett 1971: 124–25, Immerwahr 1972: 282–83.

[124] So Barlow 1986: 15–6.

would lose her all sympathy—intimacy invites solidarity. Both the exposure of the baby and the murderous attempt against Ion may be ascribed to Kreousa's ignorance; but they differ in that the mitigating factors in the first case are stronger than in the second case. The exposure of Ion seems to have been expected by Apollo and to have formed part of his original plan (cf. 29–36, 47–8, 67–8); it is a commonly anticipated reaction for a young virgin who tries to cover the shame of her illicit union. But, the assassination attempt against Ion is fuelled by Kreousa's passionate anger against the god, whom she blames for the death of their son and for her subsequent childlessness; this act was not anticipated by Apollo who had originally planned for Kreousa to be introduced to Ion in Athens (1563–68; cf. 71–3). The repeated accounts of the rape, with the constant emphasis on the violence of the god and the helplessness of the violated maiden, constitute the means by which the dramatist manipulates the audience's sympathies and arouses their pity.[125] This representation of Kreousa's suffering as undeserved ascribes a considerable amount of responsibility to Apollo. On the other hand, in so far as Kreousa's actions are presented as fully motivated in purely human terms, it is not just the god but also her character which determines her fate.[126]

After an introduction in lyric anapaests (859–61), Kreousa continues with recitative anapaests (862–80).[127] In her initial series of questions (859–64) she considers the best course of action under the current circumstances; her inclination to reveal her secret becomes increasingly more evident. Even though she does not explicitly mention Apollo just yet, it is obvious that he is constantly haunting her thoughts; by the end of this anapaestic system his own injustice comes

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[125] Usually the suffering of the victim is secondary to that done to the father or husband, since rape is primarily an offence against the property of men; hence, the preoccupation of both victim and agent of the rape to keep the story hidden from the father (λάθρᾳ πατρός, 14, 340, 1596) and the husband (1600–1). It is, then, all the more significant that Euripides in this play presents the story of Kreousa's rape from the victim's vantage point, offering a subtle psychological portrayal of the Athenian princess at the moments right before and during the course of the subsequent years.

[126] Double motivation is a recurrent feature of action both in Homer and in Greek tragedy. For Homer see Janko 1992: 3–7; Redfield 1975: 136–143; Gaskin 1990. There are several examples in the extant tragedies: in the *Ion*, see 47–8; 1190–91; 1271; see Williams 1993: 21–74; Lesky 1966.

[127] On the metre and structure of Kreousa's monody, see Lee p. 257.

to predominate so much over Xouthos's that the following lament in lyric anapaests does not contain even a single direct accusation against Xouthos. The repetition of the participle σιγῶσα ('keeping silent about', 'concealing', 868–69)[128] picks up 859 and rounds off this section of pondering whether to break her silence. Soon after her feeling of αἰδώς ('shame', 861), Kreousa mentions her τόκους πολυκλαύτους ('the sorrowful birth', 869);[129] she recalls the recurrent spiritual torment she has suffered over the many years since the birth of her illegitimate child with Apollo and eventually decides to let go of her αἰδώς. She is still attached to that past, but she is now more eager than ever before to cast off the burden (ἀπονησαμένη, 875) of these experiences. She will 'act a woman's part' (843) and reveal her secret union with Apollo, uttering the troubles of her soul, so that she may gain ease (874–75).[130] This decision comes at the end of a long invocation to the pure elements of nature to witness her outburst.[131] Kreousa first calls upon the 'starry abode of Zeus' in a condensed phrase that encompasses Zeus, the sky and the stars. Next she calls upon Athena as the goddess of the Attic soil, and espe-

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[128] See also *Hipp.* 565–8 and 603–4, for an emphatic repetition of σιγῶ.

[129] This is probably the reason why she weeps upon seeing Apollo's temple for the first time (246) and this is why she is weeping again now (876–7); cf. also 1458–9, where she tells Ion how she wept when she gave him birth and then again when he parted from her arms.

[130] The word ῥάιων, 'easier', is a medical term; Biehl at 875 quotes Eustath. *Od.* 1509, 45, λέγεται δὲ καὶ ῥάιων ὁ ἐκ νόσου ὑγιής, 'someone who has recovered from illness is said to be "easier"'. Medical vocabulary was commonly used to describe psychological troubles; it was perhaps the only way men could describe anxieties of the soul. Kreousa borrows this vocabulary to describe her situation; she wishes to lift the burden of her chest (874) so that her soul may be relieved from pain (ψυχὴ ἀλγεῖ, 'my soul feels pain') and she can find peace (ῥάιων ἔσομαι, literally 'I shall be easier'); cf. 808 with Lee. In *Hipp.* 205–6, the Nurse advises Phaidra to battle her illness with nobility and patience and at 293–6, she advises her to speak, so that a doctor may pronounce upon the disease; for her, there is no remedy in silence. The Nurse's general viewpoint is that when a woman has a problem, its solution is a matter of asking the right man; this is why she decides to speak to Hippolytus. See Knox 1979a: 205ff.; Segal 1988: 53–4. On the notion of talking as a cure, see Pseudo-Plutarch, *Lives of the ten orators*, 1.833c, where Antiphon the Sophist is said to have opened a *logisterion*, where people could come and talk about their problems; he claims to have been able to cure the grief, through *logos*, after he heard the causes of the sufferings: ὅτι δύναται τοὺς λυπουμένους διὰ λόγον θεραπεύειν καὶ πυνθανόμενος τὰς αἰτίας παρεμυθεῖτο τοὺς κάμνοντας.

[131] Traditionally, the elements were the natural allies of the innocent, powerful enough to exact punishment from the guilty, representing 'une justice plus rapide, ou plus clairvoyant, ou plus exigeant que celle des Dieux' ('a quicker or more clairvoyant justice, or more exacting than that of the Gods'), Delcourt 1938: 199.

cially of the grottoes that witnessed Kreousa's rape by Apollo, and also as the goddess of lake Tritonis;[132] if the relevance of Tritonian Athena to this context lies in the fact that the ritual performed in lake Tritonis offered one method of a trial of a virgin, then its juxtaposition to the Athenian rocks might be explained by the fact that the rocks were connected with the death of the Kekropid virgins who failed to pass the trial set by the same goddess Athena who presides over virginity.

I would like to propose a reading of this passage based upon the dramatic logic behind this invocation which comes at such an important crux of the narrative. Kreousa does not really call upon the deities of nature, but upon the starry seat of Zeus and her poliadic ('city-protecting') goddess Athena. It must be significant that she does not call upon the Sun, though she is about to bring out in the open her σκότιαι εὐναί, the 'secret love-affair' (literally 'marriage-bed'); instead she calls upon the starry seat of Zeus.[133] Is this invocation irrelevant to the following invocation of Athena and simply juxtaposed with it, or are they intended to be associated with each other?

Athena is invoked as the goddess not of the whole of the Attic land but of the specific precinct that is sacred to her and contains the rocky crags (ἐπ' ἐμοῖς σκοπέλοισι, 871) to which there are the following recurrent references in the play:[134] Hermes locates Apollo's encounter with Kreousa 'in the land of the Athenians, where the northward-facing cliffs beneath Pallas' hill are called "Long Rocks" by the lords of the Attic soil' (10–13); it is from this same rock or σκόπελος that the daughters of Kekrops, also known as the Aglaurids,

[132] On Athena's connection with the lake of Tritonis, see Owen and Burnett on 872. Delcourt finds here a covert, but clear, reference to an ordeal which used to take place at the bank of this lake, where, initially, a maiden had to prove her virginity by surviving severe stoning, and later by exposing herself to the physical dangers of the water of the lake (1938: 200ff.). Loraux goes even further both by detecting an early allusion to these trials of virginity at 863, and also by interpreting Kreousa's invocation to the Tritonian Athena as 'a declaration that she is a virgin still, intact despite rape—even despite marriage' (1993: 224–25); in this interpretation Loraux finds support for her more general theory that the cause for Kreousa's barrenness is her incomplete transition from a state of virginity and her natal family to the state of motherhood and her conjugal family.

[133] For more references in tragedy to Zeus' starry seat, see Mastronarde 1994: 430 on Pho. 1006.

[134] There are more instances of the use of this word in this tragedy than in any other extant play by Euripides: 273, 724, 1433, 1479, 1578, (715). Cf. two mentions of the word in *Cy.* 43, 62; one in *HF* 639; one in fr. 176.3.

throw themselves, when they disobey Athena's order and open the casket containing the baby Erichthonios and his two guardian snakes (271–74); it is near the 'Long Rocks', a place honoured by the Pythian lightning (285), where Kreousa's father, Erechtheus, is swallowed up by a cleft in the ground, opened by the stroke of Poseidon's trident (281–83); Pan's cave adjoins the 'Long Rocks' and it is in this cave that Kreousa exposed the child she bore to Apollo, while the Aglaurids were dancing to the tune of Pan's flute, on a meadow on the top of the Acropolis (492–506); Kreousa places the rape in the cavern facing north in the rock of Kekrops, otherwise known as 'Long Rocks', and the old tutor adds to this location Pan's cave (936–41); again, when Kreousa recognises Ion's cradle, she tells him that she exposed him in the cavern of Kekrops by the crags of the 'Long Rocks' (1400); Kreousa lists as the last of Ion's birth tokens a wreath of the olive tree which Athena had planted upon the σκόπελος (1433–36); again, when Kreousa is about to reveal to Ion the identity of his father, she locates the incident of the rape at the rocky crag of Athena, where the olive tree grows, beside the rock of the nightingale (1478–84);[135] when Athena herself speaks the epilogue, she refers to the Athenians as the people who dwell around her rock (σκόπελον ἐμόν, 1578). The word σκόπελος is used in this play as a metonymy that stands for the whole of the Acropolis hill, Athena's sacred precinct, in much the same way as the ὀμφαλός, 'navel' stands for the sacred vicinity of Apollo's temple in Delphi.

My proposed reading depends upon a detailed comparison with lines 270–74, which briefly recount the aetiological myth of the nocturnal festival of the Arrhephoria.[136] There we learn that Athena placed the earth-born Erichthonios in a casket and entrusted it to the virgin daughters of Kekrops, to guard it but keep it unseen (272). But they opened the casket of the goddess (273), and died for it, spattering the rocks with their blood (274). This account is concise, but it contains all the highlights of the myth; other sources specify the manner of the maidens' death (throwing themselves off from the northern cliffs of the Acropolis), and the cause (either their fear upon

[135] See Zacharia 2001: 106–7, for the idea that the Tereus-Prokne myth is here alluded to.

[136] Paus. 1. 27.3: παραγενομένης δὲ τῆς ἑορτῆς δρῶσι ἐν νυκτὶ τοιάδε, 'when the time of the festival arrives, this is what they do at night'. On the Arrephoria, see Deubner 1969: 9–17 and above n. 76.

seeing the guardian snakes that darted out of the casket, or the madness sent upon them by the outraged Athena).[137]

The whole play is a dramatization of a number of Athenian myths; what Kreousa proposes to do in her monody is to reverse the myth of the Kekropids, and in order to do so she requests the benevolence of the starry seat of Zeus and the goddess Athena. She will no longer hide the deed (literally 'bed': οὐκέτι κρύψω λέχος, 874; cf. 860–61), about which she was supposed to keep silent (869), recalling the disobedience of the maidens (οὐχ ὁρώμενον, 'not to be seen by them', 272; λῦσαι, 'that they opened it', 273). It was in darkness that she was assaulted in the cave and in darkness that she kept the assault hidden, and it is at night that the festival of the Arrephoria, commemorating the Kekropids' myth, occurs; also, both the young girls who carried the Arrhephoria and Kreousa deposit at night precious objects in the dark caves at the base of the Acropolis. The reason for both the Kekropids' crime and Kreousa's decision to speak out is female *akrasia*: the maidens were overcome by curiosity and Kreousa cannot bear the pain in her heart any longer (874–75). The maidens paid with their blood (σκόπελον ᾕμαξαν πέτρας, 274); Kreousa with her tears (στάζουσι κόραι δακρύοισιν ἐμαί, 876);[138] perhaps there is also a pun on the maidens, παρθένους (273) and the κόραι (876), the pupils of Kreousa's eyes.[139] Kreousa invokes Athena requesting her approval for speaking out and her protection against the ultimate punishment for her *akrasia*; she recalls the tears she shed and her anguish over the years. By means of these analogies and differences, Euripides foregrounds the myth of the Kekropids. Kreousa seems to be repeating inherited patterns of action and if one repeats a crime, one would expect to be punished for it; but this is a repetition with significant difference within the ritual context of Greek theatre performance, and the outcome can be positive. But Kreousa goes too far when she attempts to kill Ion; she incurs blame and would have suffered punishment, but for divine intervention. She comes close to meeting the same fate as the Kekropids, when Ion threatens to hurl

[137] See Lee at 271–4.

[138] Note how ᾕμαξαν, 'spattering with blood', parallels στάζουσι δακρύοισιν (her eyes) dripping with tears.

[139] Loraux 1993: 225 n. 186 detects a play in the word κόραι, but suggests that there is an association with ἀγραύλοις κεράεσσιν, 'rustic horns' (882–83), as a covert reference to the Aglaurids (*agraulois/Aglauros*).

her from the rocks of Parnassus at Delphi to the rocks below (1266–68), but the timely apparition of Pythia averts the disaster and mother and son are recognized. The repetition of the Kekropids' fate is narrowly averted; there will be no death for Kreousa; her violent encounter with Apollo,[140] her silence, spiritual torment and shedding of tears were enough suffering.

Kreousa has stated explicitly her intention of revealing her secret marriage to Apollo, but she has not yet referred to the god openly. At 877 she presents her soul as a victim of the malice of both men and gods, whom she will prove to have been ungrateful traitors to the woman they loved. This is the first introduction to the theme of Apollo's ingratitude towards her, which will be further developed in the following section of her monody. As was mentioned earlier (2.3.1.), Kreousa has a strictly defined sense of justice and of the reciprocal obligation of χάρις, 'favour'. We have heard her encouraging the chorus to reveal the secret oracle of Apollo, promising them that if the news is good, they will not be wasting a favour on unreliable masters (750–51). But now it is she who has not received her due, as she is about to demonstrate in her ensuing lament. She seems to have taken Xouthos' betrayal for granted (864), so she deals no further with it. Instead, it is Apollo's betrayal of her marriage bed which causes her to despair, so now she launchs her attack against him, aiming to prove him a traitor; Xouthos is scarcely mentioned, and only as a foil for Apollo (912–15). As Kreousa proceeds with her long-awaited reproach of the god, the vocabulary becomes more ornamental and the metre changes back from recitative to lyric anapaests, indicating her increasing emotional agitation. Furthermore, the lyric anapaests are heavily spondaic.[141] Such a high proportion of long syllables is usually found in prayers and other solemn invocations of the gods and probably bears some ritual associations; in fact the whole passage (881–922) is an adaptation of the so-called 'hymnal style'. When the series of long syllables is interrupted either by a sequence of short syllables, as in 889 and 900, or by an intermingling of shorter and longer cola, as in 894–95 and in 902–3, the sudden change in tempo marks a high pitch in Kreousa's emotional outburst; in all these cases her sense that she has been wronged kin-

[140] The only shedding of blood in the case of Kreousa is never explicitly mentioned but may be assumed: her loss of virginity by her divine seducer.

[141] Cf. 881, 884–88, 890–3, 897–99, 901–3, 906–11, 915.

dles her revolt against the god whom she accuses of violence (889), negligence (900–1), indifference (905–10) and failure to reciprocate her *charis* (912–13). The several catalectic lines suggest disturbed, halting progress.[142]

The discrepancy between the form of the monody and its content is striking.[143] Kreousa uses the god's very status against him; she also draws an ironical contrast between his attributes and his behaviour. A further ironic effect is created, as we have seen, by the sequence of long syllables, which is probably connected with Delphic ritual and the paian.[144] When Kreousa finally addresses Apollo directly (885), she introduces him as a god of music, singing to the tune of the kithara, an instrument closely associated with him.[145] At 905, Kreousa returns to the same theme: Apollo is portrayed playing the kithara and singing paians (κιθάραι κλάζεις/παιᾶνας μέλπων). Inside this compositional ring is placed, in highly evocative poetry, Kreousa's account of her forced union with Apollo, the birth of their son and his presumed death by birds of prey. It is clear that Kreousa intentionally employs Apollo's sacred hymn, the paian, as a means not for his glorification but for his vilification. She employs his song to tell the tale of her rape; ironically, the song in his honour serves as a means for her resistance against male and divine injustices (877–80) and it initiates, simultaneously, a process of demystification of Apollo as a creature with bestial instincts: at 894–96 she attributes her rape to Apollo's lust, a motive shared with uncivilised creatures. Perhaps this is the association we are encouraged to infer by the similarities between the passages referring to Apollo's and Pan's music in this

[142] So West 1987: 60–1.

[143] See LaRue 1963: 127, for a list of the elements which conventionally constitute the 'hymnal style', and 131–136, for a closer analysis of lines 881–922; see also Wassermann 1940: 591, n. 9; Immerwahr 1972: 283. For a similar effect, cf. Kassandra's wedding song in Eur. *Tro.* 308–340, followed by a statement indicating her awareness of the situation for which she employs her song (356–360; 403–5), and Hekabe's request to the chorus that they take the flaming marriage torch from Kassandra's hands and replace her marriage song with lamentations (351–2), as is appropriate for the situation. Loraux 1993: 191–93, interprets Krousa's monody as an example of the race of women turning male songs against both men and gods and as a fulfillment of the chorus' wish at *Med.* 410–30 on which see also Loraux 1993: 107.

[144] Cf. Ion's monody, esp. 125–27 = 141–43; see Burnett on 125, 906, 1166; Yunis 1988: 125–26 n. 43. On the genre of the paian, see Käppel 1992: esp. 3–86, lists Eur. *Ion* 902–7 as testimonium 51 (cf. pp. 47–8); see also Rutherford 1993; 1994–95.

[145] On Apollo's music, see Eur. *IT.* 1128–29.

play: at 492–93 we are given a description of the place, Pan's cave and its vicinity, where Kreousa was raped by Apollo; outside the cave the Aglaurids dance to the 'shimmering tune of the songs of the pipes' (συρίγγων ὑπ' αἰόλας ἰαχᾶς ὕμνων, 499–500), which Pan plays inside the very cave where Kreousa bore and exposed Ion. At 881–82, Apollo sings to the tune of the lyre which sounds fair songs of the muses (ἀχεῖ/μουσᾶν ὕμνους εὐαχήτους, 884), just before Kreousa's account of her rape by the god and at the end, when the god is again portrayed as playing music indifferently (905–6), while Kreousa delivers their son. Apollo the god of civilization behaves in a way that recalls Pan, the god of raw bestial instincts.

Kreousa will no longer play the role of the τλήμων γυνή ('wretched woman', 252) enduring in silence (868–9) the τολμήματα θεῶν ('the things gods dare', 252–53)[146] and the unfounded accusations of men (398–400); she is determined to obtain the justice that the κρατοῦντες ('those in power', 254) have denied her. Kreousa's resistance poses a threat of subversion to the existing male order; if this threat is fulfilled, it will have supplied an adequate justification for male society's fear of a violent retaliation from women. How far exactly Kreousa's outburst against gods and men will take her is still left unclear. The possibility that she might find herself joining the list of such fatal female avengers as Klytaimestra, the Danaids, Medea, Phaidra, or Philomela and Prokne[147] is open, especially since she has not yet responded to the promptings of the old tutor to rise to the occasion and follow precisely such a tradition (843–46).[148]

The movement from passivity to activity, from sufferer to avenger, is reflected in the structure of Kreousa's monody. She begins with an elaborate listing of Apollo's musical attributes, postponing her direct address to the god for four lines. The choice of words carefully reproduces elements of the hymnal style (see below), leaving us with a feeling of awe towards the skilful divine musician who makes the inanimate lyre emit such beautiful sounds (884). Yet this is not a hymn to Apollo; Kreousa appropriates the language of a hymn but subverts its content and form by using it to express her secret

[146] On the two meanings of the root τλα-, see Lee on 252–4 and 905–6; Hoffer 1996: 306.

[147] On the Philomela-Prokne myth, see Hartman 1970; Joplin 1991; Forbes-Irving 1990: 99–113; Segal 1994; Zacharia 2001.

[148] For the harm female passion can inflict, see Aesch. *Cho.* 585–651, the chorus' prayer to Zeus with Garvie 1986: *ad loc.*

love-affair with Apollo. This is Kreousa's reply to the god who has confined her to silence for years. This emergence from silence and dark wooing (860–61, 868–69, 874–75) into voice and the light of truth is the resistance of the mature woman who has realized the power of the spoken word as a mode of action and is now eager to cast off the burden of her past experiences and liberate herself from the private grief of the violated virgin. In her effort to expose the injustices of men and gods, she overcomes her training to the role of submission to which women have been customarily subjected to in a male-dominated society.

After her direct invocation of Apollo, Kreousa begins to relate the story of her assault in the same hymnic style. Her description of the god's sudden epiphany brings out both his violence (891–96) and his image as the luminous god (887–90) who plays the lyre (881–884; 905–6), an image which echoes the god's representation in the *Homeric hymn to Apollo* (2–13; 182–206) and in the *Iliad* (1.44–52; 603–4). As LaRue remarks, in a normal hymn this part of Kreousa's song would have been taken up by the *hypomnesis*, a hymnic element intended to persuade the god to grant the suppliant the requested favour by reminding him either that he has done so in the past,[149] or that the suppliant has rendered a service to the god in the past.[150] Kreousa uses a combination of both kinds of *hypomnesis*; on the one hand, she reminds the god that he had sexual intercourse with her in the past, and, on the other hand, she reminds him that she rendered him a favour by giving birth to their illegitimate child in secret.

The first reminder refers to a divine favour: by choosing Kreousa as the bearer of his son, Apollo has honoured her with his divine χάρις, 'favour'; but this favour is βίαιος, 'violent'.[151] Kreousa, whose

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[149] LaRue (1963: 132) cites Sappho's prayer to Aphrodite (A.1.8). My interpretation differs from LaRue's in that I take both 881–96 and 897–904 as reversals of hypomneseis and I am inclined to read more hostile intent into Kreousa's choice of pictorial imagery than LaRue, in whose words 'the description of her beautiful seducer is doubtlessly apropos; it also fits quite well into the hymnal style'. Yet for the second passage, she is willing to acknowledge some hostility in Kreousa's words, when she comments on lines 905–6: 'one understands now that Kreousa was bitterly cynical when she stated that Apollo plays ὕμνους εὐαχήτους; they can be no such thing for Kreousa'. LaRue takes only the first passage as a reversal of a hypomnesis and the second as a 'paternity charge' against Apollo, not worrying about how this charge is made to fit the normal hymn structure of the monody.

[150] LaRue (1963: 132) cites *Il.* 1.37–42, Chryses' prayer to Apollo. Cf. also *Od.* 9.528–35, Polyphemus' prayer to his father Poseidon.

[151] Euripides has not missed the opportunity to describe the pain and suffering

ignorance of the divine plans prevents her from appreciating the nature of this divine favour, intends to use this reminder as a launching board for her attack on Apollo. She tells us how she was picking yellow crocuses[152] and putting them into the folds of her garment at the moment when the god made his sudden appearance, his hair ablaze with gold (887–890)[153] like a flash of light or like his Pythian lightning, which was said earlier in the play to be honouring the Long Rocks, the place where this incident occurred (285). The playwright delineates in a few lines the emotional experience of the rape victim; the speed and power of the god, whose strong virility easily subdues the unwilling but helpless virgin, whose youth and innocence enhances her weakness.[154]

Kreousa's account of the rape has often been criticised as too mild a version of an incident whose violence and inherent moral ambiva-

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which close contact with the god can bring; see also 507–8, where the chorus note the ambivalence of such a favour for the offspring of the union of mortals with gods. Cf. Aesch. *Prom.* 894–906; *Ag.* 182: δαιμόνων δέ που χάρις βίαιος, 'the favour of the gods is sometimes violent'; *Ag.* 1206: ἦν παλαιστὴς κάρτ' ἐμοὶ πνέων χάριν, 'he wrestled with me, breathing favour over me', where Kassandra refers to her union with Apollo. The violence of Apollo's assault is repeatedly mentioned: *Ion* 10–11, 437, 445; cf. also 506, 939, 941.

[152] I would argue that the beauty of the flowers performs the same kind of aesthetic function here in relation to Apollo as the beauty of the birds in Ion's monody (158–59); the clash comes at 893, where it becomes clear that the god's assault was forced upon an unwilling Kreousa. For the activity of picking flowers in such scenes, cf. (in addition to the sources cited by Loraux 1993: 228 n. 205) MacLachlan 1995: 212–13.

[153] Garner 1990: 141, in his search for intertextual allusions in the *Ion*, notes that one may find in the word μαρμαίρων an echo of Aphrodite's eyes as she appears to Helen in *Il.* 3.397. On Apollo's golden hair, cf. Pind. *Pyth.* 2.16; Eur. *Suppl.* 975; *I.T.* 1236; *Tro.* 253f.; Arist. *Birds* 216–19 (Biehl, Testimonia); see also Thorburn 2000: 41. Even if we do not pin down such an image of Apollo to a specific text, we may still claim that Kreousa is deliberately using elevated pictorial language only so as to intensify the effect of the subsequent vilification of the god; in Kreousa's mind, Apollo did not live up to his majestic divine status.

[154] The language recalls Persephone's abduction by Hades, as has often been noted: Kreousa, like Persephone, was picking flowers right before her abduction, tried to resist the god, who seized her by her white wrist, and she cried to her mother while she was being raped. Cf. *Hom. Hymn to Dem.* 1–32, 417–33; Ovid, *Met.* 5.391–98; cf. also Kreousa's reference to this myth at 1440–42. LaRue 1963: 132 rightly remarks that 'the entire description of the rape is an aberration from the usual part of a hymn in which the god's *kratos*, *menos*, or *dynamis* [strength, might, power] is mentioned. But here the bitter implication is that Apollo has used his sacred *dynamis* to rape her'. See also Wassermann 1940: 590, n. 6; Burnett on 887 and 1971: 121, n. 16; Immerwahr 1972: 283; Loraux 1993: 228–30 (with bibliography); Zeitlin 1989: 159–60; Rehm 1992: 141–42; Lee on 891; Dougherty 1996: 259 and n. 51.

lence receive so much attention in the play.[155] Burnett, a fervent defender of the god's morality, describes the 'voice of Kreousa's hatred' as 'sweet' and the god's seizing of her hand as 'no more violent than the clasping of hands'.[156] Burnett's comment is misleading, for she skims over the significant differences between the gesture of clasping hands and the χεῖρ ἐπὶ καρπῶι ('hand on wrist') motif. The former would normally denote some sort of agreement or even treaty between two equal parties, whereas the latter is a common iconographical motif, indicative of the control one person exerts over another; and when this gesture is used in the visual representation of a god or a man leading a bride by the hand, 'there is a general consensus that it has to do with abduction ritual',[157] as in the case described in *Ion* 891 and in the Persephone myth. Such pictorial vocabulary is traditionally meant to record the unwillingness of the bride to join the groom. Kreousa provides many indications of her unwillingness to submit to Apollo throughout her monody; her account of the rape scene is introduced as Apollo's μομφάν, 'blame' (i.e. 'disgrace', 885), is subsequently made clearer by her fruitless cries to her mother (893) and is completed by her comment on the way Apollo chose to fulfill his pleasure shamelessly (ἀναιδείαι, 895). Within this context, the phrase λευκοῖς δ' ἐμφὺς καρποῖσιν χειρῶν, 'not letting go of my pale white wrists', is to be taken as a visual representation of Kreousa's reluctance to surrender to the god. Such resistance and eventual reluctant transition to a new phase is a characteristic pattern found in many rites of passage, amongst which is the wedding ritual.[158] We may recall that just

[155] For a similar effect see the account of Tess's seduction in ch. 11 of T. Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*. There too poetic language is used for something extremely exploitative and brutal; it is presented as a seduction in an ethereal atmosphere and in lyrically-described natural surroundings, with no mention of anything crudely physical, in a high-style treatment which maintains a peculiar ambivalence. For the tension between Kreousa's language and the brutality of the incident, see Lee on p. 258.

[156] Burnett on 890 and 891; 1962: 95–6; cf. Wolff 1965: 181; Hartigan 1991: 80; Gellie 1984: 96. Contrast Owen, xxiv; Whitman 1974: 74.

[157] See Jenkins 1983: esp. 140–142; at n. 29 he quotes Westermarck (*A History of Human Marriage*. London 1921: 267, n. 4): 'Among the Auin, the bridegroom seizes the bride's wrist and almost drags her to his hut', an act that is paralleled in Kreousa's description of her rape, according to which the god seized her by the wrist and led her inside the cave.

[158] The mythological paradigm for the wedding ritual is the marriage of Peleus and Thetis, to which we find a reference at *IA*. 1036–37; see Foley 1982: 163;

as Kreousa is now unwilling to go with Apollo, Ion was unwilling to go with Xouthos (644–46); for Ion it meant the transition from adolescence to manhood, for Kreousa it means the transition from virginity to womanhood, only in her case it is more painful, since she is forced to cross the threshold of virginity abruptly and violently, with no warning or explanation.

The lack of any other explanation for her assault has led Kreousa to assume that the god raped her only to satisfy his lust (896). In her choice of words one can discern a strong tone of reprimand. The god is presented as having led Kreousa to the cave ἀναιδείαι (895);[159] the choice of this word recalls Kreousa's decision at the beginning of her monody to overcome her αἰδώς, 'shame', and reveal her secret union with Apollo. Certainly there have been allusions to the god's injustice and shameful behaviour before in the play,[160] but this is the first time the god is said to have acted against αἰδώς. In fact, it is not unparalleled for a god to be said to feel αἰδώς, however surprizing we may find this; Athena's words at the end of *Ion* are clearly relevant (1556–58, Apollo sends Athena because he fears he might incur blame), although the actual word αἰδώς is not used. In Euripides' *Iphigeneia in Tauris*, Orestes sneers at Apollo because the god's motive for driving him from Greece was (so Orestes claims) that he αἰδοῖ τῶν παρὸς μαντευμάτων, 'feels shame at his earlier oracles' (713).[161] Perhaps in the present passage Euripides has in mind Pindar's *Pythian* 9, where Apollo, struck by love for Kyrene, turns to the Centaur Chiron for advice, and asks him whether it is permitted for him to lay his hand upon her and pluck the honeyed fruit of love (36–7). The inspired Centaur replies:

> κρυπταὶ κλαίδες ἐντὶ σοφᾶς Πει-
> θοῦς ἱερᾶν φιλοτάτων,

Jenkins 1983: 140. See also Lee on 891, and Dougherty 1996: 259 and n. 51 for this point, which I made independently in my 1996/97 doctoral dissertation.

[159] I disagree with Hartigan's claim (1991: 80) that 'it is ambiguous . . . whether (*anaideia*) refers to his or her shamelessness'. The poet presents Kreousa clearly accusing Apollo of trampling the flower of her virginity selfishly, without bothering to obtain her consent.

[160] ἀδικία: 254, 341, 355; αἰσχύνη: 288, 367.

[161] Cairns 1993: 302 n. 135, cites also *Helen* 884–6. The *thought* of divine shame is present when Hera in *Iliad* 14 affects to feel embarrassment at Zeus' proposal that they should make love in the open (330ff.), though the context is highly anthropomorphic. Gods could feel shame amongst themselves, but can also feel abashed in the face of human rebuke.

> Φοῖβε, καὶ ἔν τε θεοῖς τοῦτο κἀνθρώποις ὁμῶς
> *Αἰδέοντ'*, ἀμφανδὸν ἁδείας τυχεῖν τὸ πρῶτον εὐνᾶς (39–41).
>
> The keys to skilled persuasion in the sacred rites of love are secret, Phoibos: men and gods alike hesitate [the verb is αἰδέομαι] to go with open pleasure to the bridal bed (tr. Nisetich 1980).

Pindar's Cyrene is not a rape victim of Apollo, since the whole point of the story is that with the power to use force Apollo nevertheless achieves *peitho* ('persuasion'). But Apollo, in Kreousa's report, did not exhibit any similar inhibitions towards the Athenian princess; he showed no αἰδώς for the 'sacred rites of love', but openly sought satisfaction for his lust and rendered her no favour.

Kreousa concludes her first reminder to the god with a clear ironic reversal of the traditional *hypomnesis*. On her lips the beneficial connotations of a χάρις, 'favour', turn sour;[162] the god is accused of depriving her of his χάρις, which he offered instead to Aphrodite, i.e. to his own desire (896).[163] Kreousa's memories of her past continue to haunt her and to block her vision of the present; she is still so immersed in the past that she cannot yet consider any future act of vengeance. As it will turn out, she was wrong in accusing the god, who did indeed render her his favour, since what he had in mind was to ensure the continuation of the Erechtheid line and to procure a scion for the Athenian throne.

The second *hypomnesis* reminds the god of the favour Kreousa has rendered him in the past. The new subject is marked emphatically by the grammatical change from second person singular (ἦλθες, 'you came to me', 887) to first person singular (τίκτω, 'I give birth to a son', 897) and a shift from past to present tense. Thematically this comes as a continuation of the concluding lines of the first reminder: having recounted her illicit union with the god, Kreousa now relates to him what happened to the child born of that union. According to her account, in fear of her mother (897)[164] she bore the child and

[162] On the occurrences of χάρις in the *Ion*, see Wolff 1965: 178–79.

[163] But if taken literally, the same phrase, i.e. Κύπριδι χάριν πράσσων, 'doing a favour to Aphrodite', could also refer to the love Aphrodite is said to have traditionally instilled in immortal hearts for mortal lovers, as described in the *Hom. Hymn to Aphrodite* 45–52; cf. also *Ion* 1092–3. For the metaphoric meaning of the favour done to Aphrodite, cf. *Ion* 1103–5: πρός δ' Ἀφροδίταν ... θέμενος χάριν, which again means 'doing a favour to Aphrodite', and refers to Xouthos' union with the alleged mother of his alleged son.

[164] On the hiding of the event from the father, see above n. 125. On the importance of this theme in the play see Loraux 1993: 218 and n. 154.

exposed him on the wretched bed where she, the wretched one, was bitterly assaulted by the cruel god. Kreousa is so much drawn into her retelling of this past story[165] that she seems to be reliving every moment of the story she narrates. In psychological (Freudian) terms, such obsessive return to the primal scene of pain, such repetition-compulsion is the only way to free oneself from a traumatic past.[166] Re-experiencing the rape and the exposure of the baby may help Kreousa recover her identity as a violated virgin and an unfulfilled mother and liberate her from her previous inaction through renewed action; during the course of her outburst, we witness her transformation into an active plotter, a temporary *theomachos* (a 'fighter against the god'), who is getting ready to face the present and plan for her future vengeance.[167]

Kreousa concludes her attack by projecting her hatred for Apollo onto his birthplace. The step from her lost child, who has been stripped of his swaddling clothes, to Delos, the island holy to motherhood and birthplace to Apollo, is strikingly powerful. Leto's σεμνὰ λοχεύματα, ('solemn birth pangs, 921), and idyllic birthplace are contrasted with Kreousa's counter-world of pain. Delos revealed itself from the bottom of the sea to provide a place for Leto to give birth, and her divine seducer, Zeus, created a palm tree for her to hold onto in the hour of her travail. By contrast, according to Kreousa, Apollo after their union, abandoned her; he did not facilitate her pregnancy or cared for their exposed son, hence he no longer deserves the love of Delos; the island hates both him and his attributes (i.e. the laurel-tree).[168]

2.5.3. *Kreousa in Transition*

We have seen in the preceding section how Kreousa's monody marks an important step in the transition her character undergoes in the

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165 Cf. also Iphigeneia who tells the story of her sacrifice at Aulis repeatedly: *IT* 26–30; 354–71; 852–66.

166 Freud 1961. See also Wolff 1965: 171; Zeitlin 1980: 64; Segal 1986: 260 n. 79.

167 Kreousa is only temporarily setting herself against Apollo but by the end of the play she reconciles with him; she 'lacks, among other things, the persistence of true *theomachoi*'; see Mikalson 1991: 284–85 nn. 131–32, and his discussion of *theomachoi* in Greek tragedy at 147–51 and 158–62.

168 For Apollo, Delos, and Athens, and the sometimes tense relations between the last two, see below ch. 3.3.

course of this play. She moves in this scene from silence to speech, from victim to aggressor, from speech to action, from object in male exchange to self-propelled female subject. But in fact Kreousa's character is in a state of flux and transition in many regards, and not only in this scene of the play. She moves from maidenhood to motherhood, from being a fervent opponent of Apollo to being his pious follower, from her fixation with the past to the development of expectations for the future.

When we see her in this play, Kreousa's most important transition, from maiden to mother—the transition that secures her an important place in the mythology of Athens—is already behind her. But she has performed an incomplete transition: the baby to whom she gave birth she thinks is dead, she hates the god who violated her rather than accepting the gift of his favour. Perhaps the two features most firmly established by her account in the monody are her willingness to resist Apollo, due to her understandable failure to grasp the full implications of the divine grace which has been bestowed upon her—a defect that for a long time will continue to prevent her from recognizing the divine providence in events as they unfold, and her portrayal as a woman of a peculiar kind of courage which arises from fear (898). Earlier this courage leads her to commit an ἀδίκημα, a 'wrong',[169] after her rape by exposing her baby and leaving it to die in order to avoid the shame her unfortunate intercourse with Apollo entailed; later her wrong-doing is further exemplified in her attempt to kill Ion, as a result of her fear for the elimination of the Athenian autochthonous race, prompted by the apparent intrusion of her husband's illegitimate son and his imminent usurpation of the Erechtheid throne.[170]

When Kreousa's assassination attempt against Ion fails, the princess is advised by the chorus women to seek asylum from the outraged

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169 Is it an *adikema* in fact to expose a baby? Or is the *adikema* to have been raped? Or is it to expose the baby without his father's consent? Rabinowitz 1993: 202–4 maintains that the text foregrounds the exposure over the rape to emphasize Kreousa's culpability over Apollo's.

170 The motivation in terms of preserving the purity of the Athenian race and the lengths to which Kreousa and the old man have to go to exact punishment from the intruders have a strong Euripidean flavour of irony since they may be seen as a covert criticism of the Athenians' rigid views about purity of race. Whitman 1974: 75 on lines 161–69, which focus on Ion's obsession with the purity of the temple, remarks that 'purity involves bloodshed', i.e. a crime which pollutes the city. Euripides seems to be pointing out this paradox in his play.

Ion and his Delphian followers at Apollo's altar (1255, 1258). It is then (1306) that Kreousa as a suppliant becomes entirely dependent on Apollo (1285: ἱερὸν τὸ σῶμα τῶι θεῶι δίδωμ' ἔχειν, 'I give my body to the god as his sacred possession'), just as the virgin bride through the marriage rites centred around the hearth of her husband's house becomes entirely dependent on her new master.[171] This action forms the turning point of Kreousa's struggle against Apollo. Kreousa, though 'twice-wedded', remained in her natal family and by becoming an *epikleros* (an heiress without close male kin, above n. 106), undertook the obligation of the male members of the family to assure the purity of the race. It is only after she becomes a suppliant at Apollo's altar that she finally leaves the natal hearth and, by being attached to her peculiar conjugal house, is allowed to resume her female identity and become the mother of her 'common' children with Xouthos (1589). From Apollo's altar, Kreousa rushes to embrace Ion, her long-lost son. By the end of the play, Kreousa's transition from feeling hatred for Apollo (in her monody), to recognizing the wisdom of Apollo's plan (1540–45), from temporary *theomachos* to earnest *theosebes* (devout worshipper), is visually indicated by her clasping of the ring upon the temple-door before she departs to Athens (1609–13), a gesture which inverts the involuntary clasping of her hand by Apollo at the time of the divine assault (891).[172] Here, it denotes acceptance, agreement, recognition.

Kreousa makes her transition from past to future successfully, when she recognizes her son and acknowledges the omnipotence of Apollo. She re-interprets the divine assault and accepts it as a necessary sacrifice for the benefit of the autochthonous Athenian line.[173] Apollo's favour involved benevolent violence in order to meet the need of supplying a divine offspring for the Athenian autochthonous race. Earthborns and Olympians are reconciled in the figure of Ion. Their conflict depicted on the Delphic temple's pediments as described in the parodos and the opposition of Kreousa to Apollo is now resolved. Kreousa is to learn to accept her past if she is to have a future; she needs to go back and complete her transition through a series of

[171] Cf. Seaford 1987; Zeitlin 1986: 139.

[172] For the symbolism of this gesture, see above p. 93 and n. 157.

[173] Ion too is persuaded that Apollo is his father: πείθομαι . . . καὶ πρὶν τοῦτο δ' οὐκ ἄπιστον ἦν, 'I am convinced . . . even before, this was not something beyond belief', 1607–8.

events which repeat her past experience, but with a significant difference. Her sufferings will now turn to permanent blessing, she is told by Athena (1603). A harmony may, at last, preside over the Erechtheid palace; Kreousa breaks away from Γῆ (Earth), accepts Apollo's providence and will henceforth be able to produce children with Xouthos (κοινὸν γένος, a 'common race', 1589). Kreousa, we may say, is the Aglaurid who does it right. In this regard as in so many others, she and Ion are perfect for one another.

At the level of communication between divine and human beings, a new era seems to be starting; Athena communicates directly with mortals, in contrast with Hermes' prologue appearance. She undertakes to preside over the procession that will take the Athenian royalty to Athens. Ion will cross the threshold of adolescence into the world of adulthood under the escort of Athena (1574). This progression is of a kind similar to that which we find at the end of *Heracles*, a play about another hero of dual parentage. In that play, Heracles, the son of both Zeus and Amphitryon, follows Theseus from Thebes to Athens; Athena will raise a monument of stone to him and honour him with sacrifice (Eur. *Her.* 1328). In the *Ion*, though, we are not given a wholly neat and tidy (happy) ending; we are left with loose ends: Xouthos will remain deceived; Ion will remain illegitimate; Apollo, as his emissary goddess Athena relates, does not appear 'lest he should be reproached openly for his old doings' (1558).

2.6. The cure of Athens

The word μητρόπολις, 'mother-city', does not occur in the *Ion*, but it is difficult to imagine that it was not in the minds of Euripides and of many members of his audience at the end of the play. The word has two meanings, both of which are activated by Athena's address to Ion and Kreousa. The first, in terms of chronological attestations, is 'one's mother-city, mother-country, home':[174] at the end of the play, Kreousa will return to the city that she has always acknowledged as her home, and Ion discovers that the city which is his only true home is not Delphi, where he was raised, but Athens,

[174] *LSJ s.v.* 2, adducing Pindar, *Nemean* 5.8; Soph. *Ant.* 1122 and *OC* 707.

where he was born. The definitive return of both figures to the city they had come from provides a harmonious ring-structure both for the basic story-line of the mythical narrative of the play (Ion's birth is *exodramatic*, i.e. happens outside the course of the play), and for its dramatization (which begun with the successive entrances of four different visitors to Delphi Hermes, Ion, the chorus, and Kreousa), thereby permitting an emotionally satisfying close to its plot full of turmoil and surprise. Euripides could easily have concluded his play on this note of return, restoration, repetition.

Instead he has chosen to add a second element whose importance we discussed at the beginning of this chapter: Athena's prophecy that the sons of Ion will colonize Attica and that remoter descendants of Ion will go on to establish colonies in the Cyclades, Asia-Minor and the area facing the Hellespont (1575–87). Athena's mention of colonization recalls the second meaning of μητρόπολις, which first occurs in authors contemporary with or slightly earlier than Euripides: 'mother state, as related to her colonies'.[175] The mother-city to which Kreousa and Ion will return will itself become a mother state, not only for the citizens born within its confines, but also for those who belong to the colonies it will now be able to found. In a certain sense, not only Kreousa will be cured of her barrenness: Athens too will become a mother. The cure of Athens will permit her, henceforth, to give birth to colonies.

For in the *Ion* Euripides is taking the framework of myths of ritual transition and building upon it stories of rites of passage undergone not only by Kreousa and Ion, but also by Athens itself. The repetitive failures that had characterized the generations of the race of Erechtheus in the generations before Ion had signalled the limitations not only of the members of one family, but also of the city whose destiny was ineluctably intertwined with them. Trapped in its dogmatic vision of autochthony, Athens too had been barren, in the sense that it had not been able to develop from within itself the forces necessary to project it into a vital future. Euripides shows us in his play that Athens too has evolved: after those unsuccessful attempts, not only will Athens itself be able to survive into the future, but it will also be able to initiate colonization and thus bring other communities into existence. Colonization for a city is a little like

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[175] *LSJ* *s.v.* 1: Aesch, Hdt., Th. See Malkin, *OCD*³ *s.v.* 'metropolis' (a). (Senses (b) and (c) are later usages and do not concern us).

exogamy for a male and childbirth for a woman: it is the movement outwards from oneself which is necessary if the self is to survive not in its doomed individuality, but at least in the deputized form of children.

This movement outwards at the end of the play goes so far that, to a certain degree at least, it is even capable of including Xouthos. For Athena announces to Kreousa that she will have children, a κοινὸν γένος, a 'common race' with Xouthos (1589). Athena's point is not only that the outsider can be allowed in and can receive at least a partial justification on the basis of the saved integrity of the inside. On the contrary, her message, and Euripides', must be stronger: that the outsider must be allowed in if what lies within is to be rescued. Thus, when Kreousa wonders how the children of Aiolos could possibly have anything to do with those of Athena (τοῖς Αἰόλου δὲ πῶς μετῆν τῆς Παλλάδος, 1297),[176] she is mistaken: it is only by the inclusion—limited to be sure, but inclusion nonetheless—of the imported graft of the children of Aiolos that the children of Athena can possibly flourish. Thus the ending of the play does not so much propagate the discourse of exclusion that so many scholars see in it:[177] the outsider can and, indeed, must be incorporated under new terms if the saving difference is to be established within the pattern of repetition. Viewed in this light, the *Ion* is not only 'patriotic' or merely pan-Hellenic: it is also humanistic, in that it sets no clear limits to the scope of its liberal vision. *Mutatis mutandis* we may be reminded of the last book of the *Iliad*, in which the partial, but deeply moving, recognition of the common humanity of Achilles and Priam displays something of the same movement outwards. Those scholars who see only the patriotic and xenophobic aspects of the ending of the play seem to be trapped within the perspective of Kreousa: obsessed, as she is, with purity and interiority, they may not have recognised that the whole point of the play is to move beyond that obsession, to transcend the interior so as to allow in the outsider as well. In fact the play is far more humanistic than modern scholarship has sometimes allowed. Kreousa's mistaken

[176] This is an unmistakeable reference to Xouthos, who was first introduced by Kreousa as Αἰόλου Διός . . . ἄπο (292).

[177] See Walsh 1978; Loraux 1993: 205ff.; Saxonhouse 1986 and 1992. But cf. Zeitlin 1989: 177–82, who draws attention to the Euripidean effort to balance the two contradictory Athenian claims to autochthony and philoxenia.

obsession with autochthony has made her less than fully human; only when she learns to accept Apollo and Xouthos will she be permitted to accept Ion as well. We are now in a better position to understand the emphasis in the importance of repetitions with a difference in this play. For the audience of this play such a technique creates expectations which Euripides is at pains to frustrate. In the end, the audience too is to learn to confront honestly the complexity and ambiguity of reality. If so, then the cure of Athens will take the form of a cure of Euripides' Athenian audience.

CHAPTER THREE

APOLLO IN THE *ION*

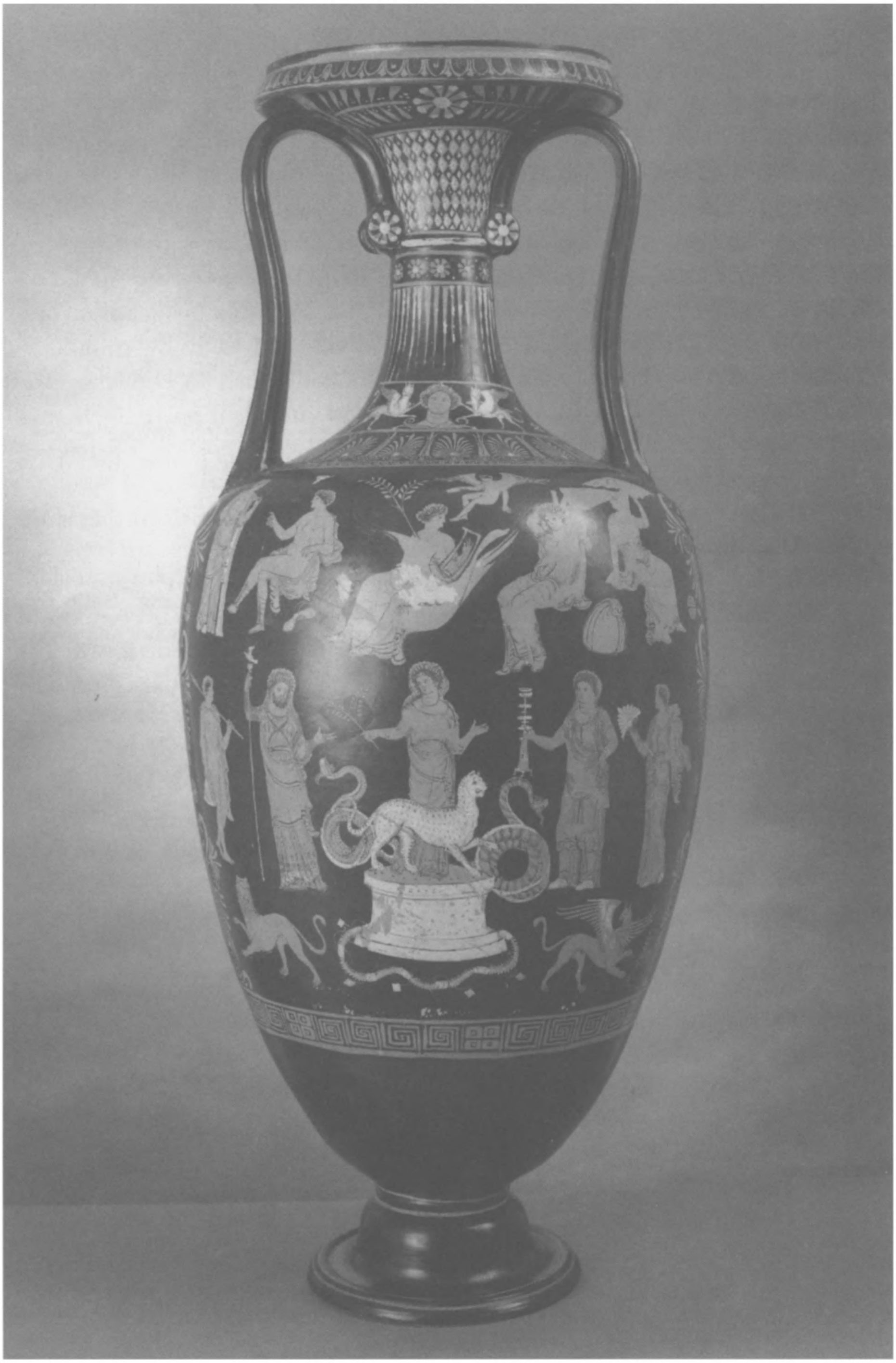
ΘΕΤΙΣ· *Apollo in nuptiis meis cecinit* τὰς ἐμὰς εὐπαιδίας	Thetis: Apollo sang at my wedding that my child
νόσων τ' ἀπείρους καὶ μακραίωνας βίου,	would not know sickness, would live long,
ξύμπαντα τ' εἰπὼν θεοφιλεῖς ἐμὰς τύχας	and that every blessing would be his
παιῶν' ἐπευφήμησεν, εὐθυμῶν ἐμέ.	and he sang such praises that he rejoiced my heart.
κἀγὼ τὸ Φοίβου θεῖον ἀψευδὲς στόμα	And I had hopes that the divine lips of Apollo,
ἤλπιζον εἶναι, μαντικῇ βρύον τέχνῃ·	fluent with the art of prophecy, would not prove false;
Ὁ δ' αὐτὸς ὑμνῶν, αὐτὸς ἐν θοίνῃ παρών,	but he who praised, he who was present in the feast,
αὐτὸς τάδ' εἰπών, αὐτός ἐστιν ὁ κτανὼν	he who said these things, he it is who killed
τὸν παῖδα τὸν ἐμόν.	my son.

Aeschylus F350 *TGrF*

Apollo [in the *Ion*] is the *anti-parrhesiastes*
Foucault (2001: 44)

3.1. Introduction

Apollo is, at least on the divine level, the absent centre of the *Ion*. In a play in which one god delivers the prologue and another one resolves the crisis from the *mekhane*, Apollo himself never appears and protects his invisibility with jealous rigor. Yet there is not a character in the play who is not obsessed with Apollo in one way or another: as victim, as son, as worshipper, as admirer, as spokeswoman, as enemy, all the human characters define themselves in their relations to the world, to one another, and to themselves by the mediation of the god of Delphi. The play is set in front of the Apolline temple at Delphi and its inscribed maxim 'know thyself'. This location is both a constant reminder of Apollo's absent presence and at the



Kreousa as suppliant standing on Apollo's altar at Delphi. Red-figure Loutrophoros attributed to the Dareios Painter. Greek from Apulia, South Italy, ca. 330 B.C. Photograph courtesy of *Palladion Ancient and Fine Art Gallery* (Basel).

same time entirely appropriate for what I shall argue is an inward journey of self-discovery.

The *Ion* can be viewed, at least in part, as Euripides' meditation upon Apollo—a meditation no less stringent and no less complex than Aeschylus' in his *Oresteia*. If we are to understand the play, we must understand the god both inside and outside the play of which he is and is not part. To that end, we must consider not only Apollo's own role in cult and in tragedy generally, but also his relation to some other prominent gods as treated in tragedy. Only by comparison with the dramatic treatment of other gods, such as Dionysus in the *Bacchae*, or with treatments of Apollo in other plays such as Aeschylus' *Eumenides* or Euripides' *Alcestis*, will it be possible to determine what, if anything, is unique about Euripides' handling of Apollo in the *Ion*.[1]

Apollo's worship was widespread in archaic and classical Greece, though he was always strongly associated with two cult centres in particular, Delos and Delphi. The prehistory of the god is complex. First we can distinguish a Dorian-Northwest Greek component, which relates him to the *apellai*, the annual gatherings of the tribal or phratry organization, in which Apellon the *ephebos* stands on the threshold of manhood. Second, there is a Cretan-Minoan component, which connects the god with the healing hymn and dance, the paian, his subsequent cult hymn. Third, Apollo's image as an arrow-bearing guardian god can be derived from a Syro-Hittite component. The integration of all these elements into one unified figure can be assigned to the power of poetry, which at the same time is placed under Apollo's special protection.[2]

Euripides brings to expression in the *Ion* the totality of these diverse aspects of the god. But he does not do this by making him one of the main characters of the play, as he would do later with Dionysus in the *Bacchae*. On the contrary, he does not allow his Apollo to appear on the stage at all, even as a prologue or epilogue figure. Instead, he assigns to Apollo's siblings-emissaries, Hermes and Athena, the roles of opening and closing the play, respectively. The conspicuous absence of the god has received much attention from recent scholars, who have offered a variety of interpretations on the over-

[1] See below 3.7.
[2] Burkert 1985: 143–49.

all meaning of the play. Their reactions stretch along a vertical axis from seeing the play as utterly condemning the god, at the one end, perhaps with historical circumstances in mind (Athenian disappointment with Delphi in the Peloponnesian war),[3] to viewing it as firmly establishing his divine providence, at the other.[4] Along a horizontal axis, the play has been read with Kreousa as centre of attention and through critique of the Athenian autochthony myth,[5] as a defence of women's role in society[6] or in the procreation process. It has also been read with a focus upon the ritual aspects of the play and its allusions to ritual mysteries related to the search for identity and the transition from male adolescence to manhood and from female virginity to motherhood.[7] Apollo has been accused of violating Kreousa, neglecting his child, inflicting childlessness upon Kreousa, allowing mother and son to come close to killing each other, not informing Kreousa of her son's whereabouts, giving a false oracle to Xouthos, being compelled to change his original plan for an *anagnorisis* between mother and son in Athens, as reported by Hermes in the prologue, to an earlier one in Delphi, and, finally, having to send Athena in the end to settle the unresolved issues of the play, not daring to appear himself, 'lest he should be reproached openly for his old doings' (1558), as his very own emissary frankly admits.[8]

In this chapter we shall consider Apollo in various aspects, alone or together with other deities. Section 2 (Apolline pairings) considers Apollo in relation to Hermes, Athena and Dionysus. With section 3 (Historical interpretations) we return to Apollo alone, and discuss attempts to interpret Euripides' treatment of Apollo, in the *Ion* and elsewhere, as part of a specific historical phenomenon: Athenian political relations with Apollo of Delphi and Delos. Section 4 (Ephebic Apollo) examines another line of historically specific interpretation:

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[3] See further below 3.3.

[4] For the defense, see Burnett 1962; Wassermann 1940; Lloyd 1986; for the prosecution, see Willetts 1973: esp. 207; Conacher 1967: esp. 269; Sinus 1982; Hartigan 1991; Seidensticker 1982: 239–41. Knox 1979a: 250–74 and Gellie 1984–85 find Apollo's representation to be closer to the gods of comedy.

[5] Saxonhouse 1986: 252–73; more specifically she sees the play as an attack upon Athenian xenophobia and as a strong criticism of the restrictions of the Athenian autochthony myth. For a discussion of this aspect of the play, see above ch. 2.

[6] Loraux 1993: 184–236; esp. 190.

[7] Zeitlin 1996: 285–338. On the initiatory or ephebic aspect of the play, see further below 3.4.

[8] Wassermann 1940: 588.

the connection between Apollo and some of Euripides' male characters with the Athenian institution of the *ephebeia*. Section 5 'Apollo as Founding Father', considers Apollo in another of his main roles, that of the enabling deity of colonization. In section 6 (Oracle and play) I look at the *Ion* as a whole and offer a survey of the play, concentrating in particular on the Apolline dimension and the different interpretations of Apollo's role offered by the characters in the play. Section 7 (Apollo as director) attempts a literary interpretation of Apolline ambiguity. In these last three sections we shall examine the various aspects of the multifaceted Apollo of the *Ion* as these are looked upon from different vantage points through the eyes of the dramatic figures, who offer a multitude of potential, and often conflicting, interpretations in their effort to come to grips with the god's behaviour and oracle.

3.2. Apolline Pairings

Apollo cannot be examined in isolation from the other gods of the Greek pantheon as they appear both in cult and in literary and, more specifically, in dramatic contexts. Such an approach entails serious methodological problems. The classic objection to the 'one-eyed' approach is that it does not do justice to the character of ancient polytheism.[9] By contrast, the paired approach allows and encourages attention not only to functions and attributes (the one-eyed approach can do that, though less obviously and less well) but also to tensions and contradictions within a single divine figure—the point being that a single divinity can be a receptacle for opposites. A pairing with another, antithetical or complementary, divinity can bring out these inner ambivalences more clearly. That such ambivalences exist in ancient Greek and probably in any religious system, is certain: for instance both Artemis and Iphigeneia stand simultaneously for chastity and for childbirth;[10] and students of ancient initiation rituals like Jan Bremmer have taught us to look for features of Greek rites of passage which emphasise transition to a particular

[9] North 1997: 63. For a clear programmatic statement about pairings, see Vernant 1990: 101–119 at 109.
[10] Lloyd-Jones [1983b] 1990: 308–30.

life event by stressing its opposite.[11] In this section I shall explore the connections or pairings between Apollo, and some other gods and goddesses who are important for the understanding of the *Ion*, including one who does not appear as a character in the play at all, namely Dionysus.

The only two gods who actually appear in the *Ion* are Hermes and Athena, both probably played by the same actor.[12] We shall treat them in order of appearance. Hermes as god of travel, guide of souls, and brother of Apollo appropriately performs the transportation of Ion to Delphi in the prehistory of the play.[13] Hermes delivers the prologue and begins by rehearsing the relevant past facts, thus exposing the misbehaviour of his older brother, Apollo. He then purports to predict the future, thus in a way usurping the mantic role of Apollo. But in so far as he has any predictive powers he misleads his audience through imperfect knowledge. He thus unwittingly plays out one of his oldest roles, that of trickster, or, perhaps, we could say that the deceiver has himself been deceived.[14] The shiftiness is an important Hermetic trait well-adapted in a play where truth is repeatedly concealed and dramatic characters offer conflicting interpretations of Apollo's words and actions.[15] The close but duplicitous relationship between Hermes and Apollo is as old as the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* in which Hermes steals Apollo's cattle and later gives Apollo the gift of the lyre as part of a reconciliation brought about by Zeus.[16] In a profound sense Hermes, who in the *Ion* as elsewhere is unusually close to mortals, is a natural complement to Apollo, whose distance from the immediate action of the play conforms to

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[11] Bremmer, 1994: 44–50.

[12] Pickard-Cambridge 1988: 146, in the distribution of parts between the three tragic actors, argues that the third actor would certainly have played the roles of Xouthos, the Pythia and Athena, and might also have played Hermes, though the latter may also have been assigned to the second actor, who played Kreousa. Though the question cannot be resolved with certainty due to the lack of relevant evidence, I would argue, for what it is worth, that a more theatrical effect would have been accomplished if the third actor played the roles of all the three emissaries-agents of Apollo, who, along with the ignorant Xouthos, secured the realization of Apollo's plan. In a sense, one might even go so far as to say that this is the actor who speaks with the voice of the silent Apollo.

[13] Kérenyi 1976: 89 and n. 101 for Hermes as bearer of divine children.

[14] Erbse 1975: 56.

[15] See Rabinowitz 1993: 216–17.

[16] The same story, but with considerable divergences, was dramatized by Sophocles in his now fragmentary satyr play, the *Ichneutai*.

one of his cult-titles and attributes, 'far-shooter', 'he who works from afar' (ἑκατήβολος, ἑκάεργος).[17] Hermes is presented as a spectator, not in the Iliadic sense of a serene Olympian observing the puny disputes of mortals from a distance, but as a quasi-human and fallible eavesdropper who shares the audience's curiosity as to what will happen as the drama unfolds (77).[18] But at the same time he claims access to Apollo by quoting him directly at one point (29–36) and thus approximating to the role of *kerux*—appropriately enough, given that he was the traditional protector of heralds.[19] Hermes is also the god of trade and exchange and as such is a fitting prologue-speaker in a play that dramatizes the offer of Ion as a gift from Apollo to Xouthos for the sake of the future of the Athenian royal line.

The connection between Apollo and Athena, who delivers the patriotic epilogue,[20] is not so obviously grounded in traditional myth as is that between Apollo and Hermes. But they were linked at both Delphi (where Athena Pronaia was worshipped)[21] and Athens: Athena and Apollo Delios were both conspicuous patrons of the Athenian empire, while inside Athens and Attica, Apollo Lykeios (on whom see below 3.4.) is linked with Athena Polias.[22] It would be tempting to draw a parallel between Athena's assumption of authority at the end of *Ion* and the political developments of the 450s which involved the move of tribute from Apollo's island of Delos to the 'famous city named after Pallas', that is, Athens (8–9). But we shall see that this line of interpretation is erroneous inasfar as it assumes an actual replacement of Apollo by Athena. Nevertheless, at the literary level, it has been acutely pointed out[23] that there is a pattern in Greek

[17] Versnel 1985–86: 139. Apollo's arrows strike from afar and strike in the centre; in other words, for Versnel, remoteness/closeness is an aspect of Apolline ambiguity, cf. p. 144 'Apollo is the remote god'. For Apollo as 'God of Afar', see also Bierl 1994: 96. Henk Versnel in a very interesting unpublished Sather lecture discusses Hermes' position as an intermediary between gods and mortals.

[18] See above ch. 1, n. 39.

[19] For the possibility that at lines 185–89, there is simultaneous reference to Apollo and Hermes in a Delphic context, see Bousquet 1956: 574–78. On these lines, see below n. 25.

[20] We should not lose sight of the obvious point (Heath 1987: 65 n. 55) that the patron goddess of Athens is the appropriate *deus* for this 'play full of patriotic motifs'.

[21] Mastronarde 1994: 220.

[22] Jameson 1980: 232.

[23] Bierl 1994: 87, also 96 for the way in which responsibility is regularly 'taken away from Apollo and given to another divinity, in most cases Athena, the eponymous city-goddess of Athens'. Bierl is here speaking of responsibility for the successful integration of initiates; on this, see further below 3.4.

tragedy by which Athena takes charges of situations from which Apollo appears to have abdicated. This generalization was offered primarily with an eye on the most memorable literary confrontation between the two gods, namely Aeschylus' *Eumenides*. But *Ion* also fits the scheme perfectly.

There remains a third god with whom Apollo is arguably paired in the *Ion*, namely Dionysus, although Dionysus, unlike Hermes and Athena, is not a character in the play.[24] We have already noticed the most important Dionysiac associations in the *Ion*: the chorus' observation of the depiction of Bromios, the thundering Dionysus, on the Delphic reliefs;[25] the (false) suggestion that Ion was conceived during a Dionysiac festival (cf. below n. 47 on the Thyiades); the chorus' invocations of Dionysus (714–17; 1074–86, Dionysus as Iacchos); Xouthos' departure to the place of 'Bacchic fire' and the 'double crags of Dionysus'—a very emphatic reference to the god by two names in one line (1126)—so as to offer a kind of birth-sacrifice for his new-found son; and Kreousa's attempts to kill Ion during what is clearly meant to be understood as a Dionysiac feast (216–18, 550–54, 714–17, 1074–86, 1125ff., 1166ff.).[26] Two at least of these items are interconnected: Xouthos' visit to the crag or crags[27] of Dionysus is presumably motivated by the wish to mark the 'rebirth' of Ion on the site of his supposed conception during a Dionysiac festival. In a play so dominated by Apollo, the prominence of this

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[24] Zeitlin 1996: 300–4.

[25] Note also that the cult title Agyieus, used at lines 185–6 where it refers primarily to Apollo as guardian of the crossroads, is also an attested cult title of Dionysus. The adjective ἀγυιάτιδες means 'to do with Apollo Agyieus', guardian of the streets, for whom see Eur. *Pho.* 631 (Φοῖβ' ἄναξ Ἀγυιεῦ) with Mastronarde's n., and the oracle at Dem. 21.52. Harpocration says that an *aguieus* was a pointed pillar, set up in front of doorways to Apollo, or as some say to Dionysus, or as others say to both; MacDowell 1990: 271 n. on Dem. 21.51 suggests that Harpokration's remark about Dionysus may be just a false inference from the Demosthenes passage. This may be right, but as the present section shows, there is plenty of other evidence for the closeness of Apollo and Dionysus.

[26] See ch. 1 above, nn. 70, 102. For Dionysus at Delphi, see nn. 37 and 47 below. I have not here included all the Dionysiac and Bacchic allusions in the play, some of which (e.g. lines 553, 1231) mean little more than 'wine'.

[27] Note Owen's comment on line 1127: 'strictly speaking, one crag was dedicated to Dionysus, the other to Apollo'. Owen cites Paley for the interesting possibility that the *Ion* reference to δισσάς, 'double', is solely to Dionysus' crag (cf. Soph. *Trach.* 101); on this view the symbolically significant duality between Dionysus and Apollo is retained by implication, though the poet chooses to emphasize the more immediately relevant aspect.

Dionysiac material may hint at what we shall show was a profoundly important divine pairing; especially if we accept the theory[28] that twice-born Dionysus is a kind of prototype of Ion himself, who was also in a sense 'twice-born' because of the circumstances in which the evidence for his birth (the basket and tokens) is produced long after his actual birth. Ion stands not only for Dionysus but for Apollo, as we have seen; and therefore the two gods are united in the sense that both of them participate in the person of the play's eponymous hero. Indeed, Ion is 'twice-born' in a metaphorical, ephebic sense (rebirth after the social death of the initiate) which suggests Apollo the ephebe-god[29] more obviously than it suggests Dionysus' literal double birth from Zeus and Semele, though we shall see that Dionysus, too, may have had an ephebic aspect.

The Apolline-Dionysiac polarity is, of course, well-established and famous since Nietzsche's *Birth of Tragedy*.[30] Though Apollo was a patron god of poetry and poets and makes his appearance very frequently in extant Greek tragedy (he is only second to Athena)[31] in a variety of roles (oracular, ephebic, purificatory, harm-averting, god of civic order), the plays themselves are performed at a dramatic festival in honour of Dionysus; as a result there is virtually no extant tragedy that does not include an ode or at least a commemorative

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[28] Zeitlin 1996: 301–2 argues for a parallel specifically with the cult of Dionysus Liknites who was placed in a basket as an infant. Such an ingenious parallel will hardly have occurred to more than a minority of the audience, but we can more readily accept that Euripides was alluding generally to Dionysus the twice-born, a myth familiar to many.

[29] Versnel, 1985–6: 144. See also below 3.4.

[30] Kaufmann 1967; Silk & Stern 1981; Henrichs 1984; Reibnitz 1992.

[31] Athena appears in Aesch. *Eum.*, Soph. *Ajax*, Eur. *Supp.*, *I.T.*, *Ion*, *Tro.*, *Rhesus*—and the fragmentary *Erechtheus* and *Auge*. Apollo appears in Aesch. *Eum.*, Eur. *Alc.*, *Orestes*—and the fragmentary play of Sophocles, *Ichneutai*. Hermes appears in Aesch. *Prom.*, Eur. *Ion* and probably also in Soph.'s fragmentary *Ichneutai* given that the subject-matter of the play seems to follow that of the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes*. Dionysus (in Eur. *Bac.*), Poseidon (in Eur. *Tro.*), Aphrodite and Artemis (in Eur. *Hipp.*), Hephaistus (in Aesch. *Prom.*) appear once each in extant tragedy. Then, there is a series of minor divinities or heroes who appear in prologues or epilogues of the extant plays: the Dioscuri appear twice, in Eur. *Hel.* and *El.*; Heracles in Soph. *Phil*; Thetis in Eur. *Andr.*; Death in dialogue with Apollo in the opening scene of Eur. *Alc.*; the ghost of Darius in Aesch. *Pers.*; and the ghost of Polydorus in Eur. *Hec.*; Power and Violence personified appear in the prologue of Aesch. *Prom.* in dialogue with Hephaistus; and, Iris and Madness (*Lyssa*) appear in the middle of Eur. *Her.* On closing epiphanies, see Dunn 1996: 26–44; on gods in Euripidean prologues see Goward 1999: 149–65.

reference to the patron of the festival. The relationship between Apollo, the god of poetry, and Dionysus, the god of the Dionysiac dramatic festival, is close and important.

All the genres performed at the Athenian dramatic festivals, tragedy, comedy and dithyramb were under the patronage of Dionysus and were connected with him in important ways. But though Dionysus was fundamental to Athenian drama, he did not stand alone. Dithyramb at Athens was performed not only at the Great or City Dionysia but also at a festival of Apollo, the *Thargelia*.[32] It is therefore not a complete surprise to find that some ostensible dithyrambs have a definitely Apolline flavour. That is true, for instance, of a famous long fragment of Bacchylides (17), the 'Youths' or 'Theseus', which is a kind of dialogue between Minos and Theseus punctuating a narrative.[33] In form it is dithyrambic but quite suddenly closes with an invocation to Delian Apollo.[34]

The closeness of Apollo and Dionysus in tragedy is even clearer. Tragedy is Dionysiac in origin and in ritual context. Dionysus, together with Athena, Poseidon and Hephaistus, was one of the principal gods honoured in the festivals of Athens. Some of the greatest festivals such as the *Anthesteria*, the *Oschophoria*, the *Lenaia*, the *Rural* or *Deme Dionysia* and the *Great* or *City Dionysia* were dedicated to Dionysus; in the last three, dramatic performances were staged in his honour and the plays were part of the god's cult. But despite this overwhelming preponderance of Dionysus, it is Apollo, and specifically oracular Apollo,[35] who is given the crucial role in play after fifth-century play, especially the *Oresteia* of Aeschylus, the *Electras* of Sophocles and Euripides, and the *Ion* and *Orestes* of Euripides. True, Dionysus features, and as much more than a closing epiphany, in the *Bacchae* of Euripides and presumably those of Aeschylus and Sophocles as well;[36] he may also have had a large role in the *Hypsipyle*,

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[32] See Pickard-Cambridge 1962: 4, the Thargelia marks the beginning of the harvest: it involves the offer of first-fruits; it has a cathartic character; it is celebrated on the day after the expulsion of the *pharmakos*, scapegoat. See also Burkert 1979: 59–77; Bremmer 1983: 299–320; Parker 1983: 258–71.

[33] See Rutherford 1994/5: 112–35.

[34] Maehler concludes that it is really 'a paean sung by a Cean choir at Delos'; Bacchylides 17 Snell-Maehler, with Maehler's commentary (1997). Note esp. the invocation of 'the Delian' [i.e. Apollo] and the mention of 'Kean choruses' at lines 130–2: Δάλιε, χόροισι Κηίων etc. *pace* Pickard-Cambridge 1962: 26.

[35] Roberts 1984.

[36] See Dodds 1960 on evidence from earlier plays, pp. 28–33: Sophocles' son,

another piece of late Euripides: the play opened with the imagery of Dionysus dancing at Delphi and may have closed with a speech by Dionysus where he opposed Tyche and the gods.[37] Similarly, Dionysus seems to have concluded the action of Euripides' lost *Antigone*.[38] But Apollo is well ahead of Dionysus as a directing agent, on the surviving evidence; yet it will not quite do to invoke[39] the oracular dimension which Apollo has and Dionysus lacks (though this is clearly part of the explanation): in Euripides' *Hecuba*, the prophetic powers of Dionysus are important.[40]

The third genre performed at the Dionysiac festivals at Athens is comedy. Apollo does not appear in extant comedy at all.[41] An explanation of this absence in terms of Apollo's character as a terrifying god, too awesome and serious for ridicule will not work completely, in view of the less than dignified way he is handled in the *Ion* (this is true also for the *Orestes*). The *Ion* is certainly a tragedy, as I shall argue in chapter 4.1 below; but it has often been noted that some of its features generically suggest comedy. Comedy seems to be unlike dithyramb and tragedy in that Dionysus overtly features in comedy but Apollo does not.[42] The far-shooter maintains his distance from routine human contact.[43]

Iophon produced a *Bacchae* or *Pentheus*, and Aeschylus' *Bacchae* is an alternative title for the *Bassarae*; Seaford 1996: 26 n. 9.

[37] Διόνυσος, ὃς θύρσοισι καὶ νεβρῶν δοραῖς
καθαπτὸς ἐν πεύκῃσι Παρνασὸν κάτα
πηδᾷ χορεύων παρθένοις σὺν Δελφίσιν

'Dionysus, who arrayed with ritual wands and fawnskins amid the pine-torch flames on Mount Parnassus' heights, leaps in the sacred dance [with the Delphian maidens]' (tr. Sommerstein 1996b). Fr. 752 N^2 comes from a quotation in Ar. *Frogs* 1211 which is identified by the scholiast as the beginning of Eur. *Hyps.*; according to Bond, it must have formed part of the genealogy of Hypsipyle spoken by Hypsipyle herself, see Bond 1963: pp. 7, 9, 23 and see 51 for the '*topos* describing Dionysus dancing at Delphi'. See also Scullion 1998: 96–122.

[38] Webster 1967: 182, citing fr. 177 N^2.

[39] Roberts 1984.

[40] See Zeitlin 1996: ch. 5 at 172 (the 'growing influence of a deadly Dionysus that will rule this play') and 175.

[41] Even Zeus appeared in comedy wearing the usual padding like any comic character but also bearing a crown and his distinguishing eagle sceptre, see Taplin 1993: 60 n. 11 and 1996: 195 and n. 24.

[42] Colonization, an Apolline area of activity (see below 3.5), provides comic material in Arist. *Birds* and oracles and oracle-mongers are certainly made fun of (esp. lines 959ff.); but not Delphic oracles and not the oracular god of Delphi. For ridicule of a seer, see Arist. *Peace* 1043ff.

[43] Apollo does appear in satyr play (Soph. *Ichneutai*), a genre distinct from both comedy and tragedy. But there he is in the company of gods and satyrs not mortals.

It is clear, then, that there are close literary links between Apollo and Dionysus. These are part of a more general and well-established connection between the two gods, a coupling 'at once mutually antithetical and complementary'.[44] The pairing of Apollo and Dionysus inevitably evokes some famous if controversial modern names. Nietzsche's *Birth of Tragedy* is responsible for a modern polarity which is as widespread as, and almost isomorphous with, that between classical and romantic. One of the main premises of his book was that art is the formal expression of strong emotion; if it is just strong emotion or just formal expression, then it is not art. Art does not give us an intellectual message but emotional release; the emotional aspect is Dionysus and the formal is Apollo. Nietzsche's book has been enormously influential in modern thought, not just in the field of literary criticism but in disciplines apparently remote, such as anthropology: for instance, it is basic to Ruth Benedict's 1930s book *Patterns of Culture*—the subject of a recent essay by Clifford Geertz.[45] But classical scholars certainly cannot adopt Nietzche's own romantic, unhistorical, provincially Germanic and philosophizing distortion of the role of Apollo and Dionysus in Greek drama.

Let us be more specific about the areas of overlap between Apollo and Dionysus, and then try to explain the complementarity. First, Delphi. It has been said that 'the most important place where Apollo and Dionysus come to counter-balance each other was Delphi'.[46] When Apollo was away from Delphi in the winter months, so Plutarch tells us, his place was taken by Dionysus and the paian gave way to the dithyramb.[47] Plutarch is a relatively late writer, but he was a

[44] Zaidman & Schmitt-Pantel 1992: 191.

[45] Benedict uses the Apollonian/Dionysiac contrast to illustrate better the contrast between the Pueblos of New Mexico and the other cultures of North America (the former of which is allegedly Apollonian, in that they distrust individualism and opt for the middle road of tradition; the latter is Dionysiac in that they valued violent experience and tried to reach the values of existence via dreams, visions or trance), but regrettably ends in obscuring his point (Geertz 1988: 113). Benedict's remark about adolescent rites 'the boy is a warrior and may take a sweetheart, the girl is now marriageable' (p. 27) anticipates the famous remark of Vernant 'marriage is to a girl what war is to a boy' (1990: 23).

[46] Burkert 1985: 222–5; see also 1983: 123–26. It should not be forgotten that Dionysus received cult at Delos as well as at Delphi, that is, at both of the two great Apolline sanctuaries. For the temple of Apollo at Delos, see Bruneau & Ducat 1983: 130.

[47] Plut. *Mor.* 389c: ἀρχομένου δὲ χειμῶνος ἐπεγείραντες τὸν διθύραμβον τὸν δὲ

priest at Delphi for the last thirty years of his life, so he wrote with special authority on Delphic matters; and on this particular point his testimony has some much earlier iconographic support.[48]

A more difficult literary text attesting the connection between Apollo and Dionysus at Delphi is a fragment of the early third-century Atthidographer and mythographer Philochoros, as quoted by the late writer Malalas.[49] This appears to say that Dionysus' tomb was at Delphi, where he lay buried by Apollo's temple, near the sacred tripod and the *omphalos*. This at first sight fits snugly with Plutarch's remark about Dionysus and Apollo sharing control of Delphi on a seasonal basis. But the death of a god is a very strange thing, and Jacoby in his lengthy commentary on the fragment inclined for complicated reasons to link the fragment with the Orphic Dionysus whom he evidently regarded as distinct from what we might call the regular Dionysus; and he also inclined to regard the evidence as late and in important respect not necessarily Philochoran at all. This position is not altogether satisfactory, for more than one reason. First, because there was a good and non-Orphic tradition which had the

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παιᾶνα καταπαύσαντες τρεῖς μῆνας ἀντ' ἐκείνου τοῦτον κατακαλοῦνται τὸν θεόν, 'when the winter starts they raise the dithyramb and they stop the paian and for three months they call him (i.e. Dionysus) instead of the other (i.e. Apollo) their god'. During this winter absence Apollo is supposed to retire to the land of the Hyperboreans, see Burkert 1985: 146. For Dionysus at Delphi, see above n. 37 on Eur. fr. 752 N^2 (*Hyps.*) and see the vase-painting above on page 104, where the panther is probably a symbol for Dionysus. See also Bierl 1991: 91–4 and note esp. his discussion of the Thyiades, maenads connected with Apollo (Thyia was supposedly mother of Delphus by Apollo, Paus. 10.6.3–4), but also celebrating a trieteric festival in honour of Dionysus on the heights of Parnassus (Bierl 1991: 92–3 and n. 93; cf. now McInerny 1997, connecting the Thyiades specifically with the Corycian cave). See Paus. 10.4.2 and Lucan 5.73, with Burkert 1985: 224–25; at this festival 'the Thyiades . . . wake the Liknites, the Dionysus child in the winnowing basket'. See also Zeitlin 1996: 302–3 and n. 43, with bibliography on the Thyiades and Dionysus Liknites (above n. 28). For some interesting artistic evidence for Dionysus at Delphi in the fourth century, see Stewart 1982.

[48] See the Leningrad crater of the Hermitage museum by the Kadmos painter. 4th c. Photograph in Metzger 1951: St. 1807, plate 25.3. Metzger reads the painting as Apollo welcoming Dionysus at Delphi. Farnell 1907, vol. iv: 316–17 argues that Dionysus is 'greeting the god when he returns from the Hyperboreans'.

[49] *FGrHist* 328 Philochoros F7, 'the learned Philochoros in his account of Dionysus says you can see his tomb at Delphi near the golden [statue of] Apollo' (for which see Paus. 10.24.5): ὡσαύτως δὲ καὶ ὁ σοφώτατος Φιλόχορος τὰ αὐτὰ συνεγράψατο, ἐν ᾗ ἐκθέσει εἶπε περὶ τοῦ αὐτοῦ Διονύσου· ἔστιν ἰδεῖν τὴν ταφὴν αὐτοῦ ἐν Δελφοῖς παρὰ τὸν Ἀπόλλωνα τὸν χρυσοῦν. For the limbs of Dionysus preserved close to the tripod, see Callimachus fr. 643 Pfeiffer, cf. 517.

regular Dionysus indeed dying—at Argos.[50] And second, new evidence from Olbia, Pelinna and elsewhere (the Derveni papyrus, for instance) shows that the main elements of the Orphic Dionysus were fixed by the fourth century BC, before Philochoros was writing.[51]

The second area of overlap is the Athenian ephebate. We shall see below (section 3.4) that in Athenian literature and art, at least,[52] Apollo was a kind of ephebe-god, an ambivalent initiatory figure. There is a possible parallel with Dionysus, because he has been linked hypothetically with the Athenian ephebate in general,[53] and more specifically, Dionysus has been seen as an ambiguous figure comparable to Ion, who is a classic type of the Athenian youth engaged in a 'quest for identity when on the threshold of adulthood'.[54] The ephebate was a central institution by which the democratic citizen-hoplite body renewed itself. Apollo is a god of civic order, and Dionysus, especially Dionysus Eleuthereus, the 'liberator', can plausibly be associated with the beginnings of democracy.[55] It is therefore appropriate that both gods should have had an ephebic role.

Our starting-point was the literary coexistence of Apollo and Dionysus in the dramatic festivals of Athens, as exemplified by the Dionysian elements in so Apolline a play as the *Ion*. We then moved on to show that Apollo and Dionysus were complementary in other spheres, and we singled out Delphi and Athens,[56] the poles between which the *Ion* rotates. We still need to ask how, at the most fundamental level, is this complementarity to be explained? The darker

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[50] Piérart 1996: 141–51. Burkert, perhaps with this tradition in mind, unapologetically lists the Philochoros fragment among his items of evidence for a Dionysus-Apollo connection, see 1985: 223–26.

[51] Dionysus and Orphism: see esp. *SEG* 26 (1976) 1139 (Hipponion); 37 (1987) 497 (Pelinna). Among numerous modern discussions note esp. Lloyd-Jones 1990: 110–53; Parker 1995: 483–510. For the Derveni papyrus, see *ZPE* 47 (1982) after p. 300. An edition of the first seven columns of the Derveni papyrus by K. Tsatsanoglou can be found in Laks & Most (eds.) 1997: 93ff.; a provisional translation of the whole surviving text is offered by the editors at pp. 9–22.

[52] For the rather different historical cult of Apollo Lykeios at Athens, 'the god of the initiated, not the initiants', see below 3.4.

[53] Winkler 1990.

[54] Zeitlin 1996: 301, and see below 3.4.

[55] Connor 1989; Cartledge 1997: 23; Raaflaub 2000, rejects this view.

[56] We should not forget the warning of Davies 1997: 57 to the effect that Apollo's 'portfolio' of powers was exercized over the Greek world at large; he was not confined to Athens, Delphi or Delos.

and more chthonic[57] Dionysus was felt to be (and it must be significant that Dionysus replaces Apollo at Delphi in winter and is buried there), the more it may have been felt that some kind of counterpoise was needed, especially in a central and positive civic ritual like the theatre of democratic Athens. We have to be careful here: the opposite of dark is light, and etymologies and explanations of Apollo in terms of light and sun are out of fashion, though the identification Apollo-Helios was certainly current if not canonical by the fifth century BC and was known to Aeschylus and Euripides.[58] It may however be better to stress Apollo's role in purification, healing and order, as opposed to the destruction, disorder, dissolution and potentially polluting death which Dionysus can stand for. In Euripides' *Ion* the outcome is not deadly and a drastic Dionysiac *katharsis* in the mode of the *Bacchae* is not needed, despite warning hints that this is in the offing. A timely Apolline intervention actually saves Ion's life by the substitution of a sacred dove for the intended human victim. The means used in the plan to kill Ion was certainly Dionysiac, a dangerous drought of wine; but the method of rescue also has a Dionysiac tinge, because the bird, the surrogate victim, is described as one of a 'revelling band of doves'—κῶμος πελειῶν (1197). The purity of the Athenian race is achieved and maintained not by the forcible elimination of the impure (as was the intention of Kreousa's plot against Ion's life), but by the completion of Ion's Apolline education, his transition to adulthood, and his re-integration into Athenian society. Such tensions between Apolline and Dionysiac forces make *Ion* a valuable document about one of the most important and celebrated pairings in all Greek religion.

It should now be clear that and why it is always necessary to be alert to Apollo's connections with other gods,[59] although the rest of this chapter will be concerned for the most part with Apollo alone.

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[57] Burkert 1985: 224.

[58] Graf in *OCD*[3] *s.v.* Apollo, p. 122, discussing Apollo's origins argues for a connection of Apollo's name with the Dorian *apella* ('assembly'), an annual initiation festival of adolescents into manhood, rather than with the sun, as assumed by earlier theories. On the evidence for Apollo as a sun god (not earlier than the fifth century), see Burkert 1985: 149 and n. 55; Gantz 1993: 87–8. On Apollo's association with the sun in the *Ion*, see below n. 109. Apollo's solar character is stressed, e.g. in Aeschylus' *Bassarae* (fr. 23 *TGrF*), where Orpheus worships the sun instead of Dionysus, who sends his maenads (the Bassarids) to kill him.

[59] Not just those considered in detail in the present chapter. For intriguing epigraphic evidence from fifth-century Aegina, combining 'Apollo and Poseidon', see

3.3. Historical Interpretations

Structuralism has taught us to take ambivalence and even contradiction in our stride when analyzing Greek myth and tragedy,[60] so that the ambivalent or even negative representation of Apollo in the *Ion* should not trouble critics as acutely as it once did. Nevertheless some modern interpreters have continued to search for an explanation which will be peculiar to the period of the play's production—in fact, for a historical explanation. This is natural enough; after all, in the largely godless *History* of Thucydides, as for Plato's Socrates, 'the god' without further specification is always oracular Apollo at Delphi, who is thus acknowledged to affect the course of events in a special degree.[61] If the course of those events had recently been adverse to Athens, so the argument runs, then here we have sufficient explanation for the adverse handling of Apollo by an Athenian tragic poet. And Thucydides supplies clear evidence for Apollo's favour towards Athens' enemies the Spartans at the beginning of the Peloponnesian War (432): 'the god' at Delphi, when consulted by the Spartans, said that he would help them whether they asked him to or not, and that they would be victorious, provided they fought with all their strength. The plague of 430 BC seemed to the despondent Athenians to be proof that the god was keeping his promise.[62] No wonder that Apollo got a bad press in wartime Athens.[63]

This is a neat and simple argument, which in its crude form has been generally and rightly discarded.[64] It is unsatisfying even on its own terms. The Athenian relationship with Apollo's two great sanctuaries, Delos as well as Delphi, was complex in the time of the

above ch. 2.2, n. 37: the combination may have been especially prominent on Dorian Aegina, but at the same time both Apollo and Poseidon (Heliconios) have Ionian connections so that it is tempting to think in terms of imperial Athenian policy. For the mythical links between the two gods, see Smarczyk 1990: 128 and n. 215; Morris 1992: 325 and n. 31.

[60] See esp. Detienne 1986 for Apollo as himself perpetrating precisely the kind of 'crime of blood' from which he purifies others; and cf. generally Lévi-Strauss 1963: 227 for the way the same god may be 'endowed with contradictory attributes'.

[61] For Socrates, see Bömer 1963: 279, pointing out that 'the god' in ordinary Greek usage usually denotes Zeus. See above ch. 1.3, n. 102.

[62] Th. 1.118.3, echoed verbally in the plague section at 2.54.4.

[63] Parke and Wormell 1956: 180–202; cf. Davies 1994: 202 n. 12, citing Eur. *El.* as well as *Ion*; Morris 1992: 295–96.

[64] Bierl 1994: 84.

empire. On the one hand, there is certainly evidence that the Athenians at some periods were on bad terms with both the Delians and Delphians. Thus in the middle of the century the Athenians fought the so-called '[Second] Sacred War' and returned the sanctuary at Delphi to the Phokians, at the expense of the Delphians to whom the Spartans had recently given it (Thuc. 1.112). Again, the Athenians expelled the Delians from Delos in 422 BC, partly because of unsatisfactory behaviour of some sort, possibly collusion with Sparta;[65] although Apollo of Delphi soon forced the Athenians to reinstate the refugees (Thuc. 5.1 and 32). On the other hand, Apollo's Delian and Delphian servants were one thing, Apollo himself was another, and the rapid reinstatement of the Delians proves Athenian unwillingness to offend the oracular god at Delphi. As for 'Delphi', it involves a community with many subdivisions, as we have seen:[66] it is true that the oracle favoured the Spartans at one critical pre-war moment, in 431, and the Athenians took action detrimental to 'the Delphians' a couple of decades earlier.[67] But a fragmentary and tantalizing inscription from perhaps the same approximate period, namely the mid-fifth century, appears to attest an Athenian alliance with the Delphic amphiktiony, the multi-ethnos organization which was responsible for the running of the sanctuary (IG 1³ 9). In any case there is no doubt that Apollo was always important for the imperial self-presentation of Athens: Apollo was πατρῷος, the shared ancestral patron, of both the Athenians and of the Ionians, their imperial subjects and 'daughter-cities'.[68] Even after the move of the tribute treasury from Delos to Athens in 454, the Athenians continued to cultivate Apollo assiduously: there was no sudden demotion of Delian Apollo in favour of Athena Polias as patron of the Delian League.[69] Thus

[65] Parker 1996: 150 and 225.

[66] See above ch. 1.3, p. 8. It is a weakness of Roberts' otherwise illuminating treatment of Athenian relations with Apollo and Delphi that she runs together various aspects of Delphi which ought to be kept separate. Thus in the context of Athenian attitudes towards Delphic Apollo and the oracle, she erroneously cites the physical attack on Neoptolemos by the 'inhabitants of Delphi' (as she correctly calls them) in Euripides' *Andromache*; Roberts 1984: 83 n. 26.

[67] For fifth-century Athenian relations with Delphi and the amphiktiony, see Daux 1940; and for Spartan relations, see Zeilhofer 1959.

[68] See above ch. 2.1, esp. n. 1, citing Smarczyk 1990: 363ff., the Ionian Apollo Patroos is identical both with Apollo Pythios (i.e. of Delphi) and Apollo Delios. For the identity of Delian and Delphic Apollo, see further below.

[69] Barron 1964: 48 speaks of 'the adoption [of Athena Polias] as the League's

an Athenian inscription of about 432 BC (IG 13.130) tells us about the financing, partly from public funds, of a shrine to Apollo Delios. And above all, there is the evidence for the large-scale 'purification' of Delos in 426 BC (Thuc. 3.104), possibly alluded to in Euripides' *Heracles* 687.[70] It is not a valid objection that some of this evidence concerns Delos rather than Delphi, because the distinction is in important ways an unreal one. As Rudolf Pfeiffer memorably remarked in a study of Apolline ethics, 'there is complete harmony between Delphi and Delos'.[71] This was as true of politics as it was true of ethics: we have seen that in 422 Pythian Apollo's oracle paid close and disapproving attention to events on Delos. Presumably this was not a spontaneous utterance but the oracle was consulted by the Athenians at state level. Nor is there any good reason to suppose that individual pious Athenians were excluded from Delphi, or even from Olympia in the far western Peloponnese, during the war, though access may have been difficult and dangerous for purely practical reasons.[72]

In view of all this, we must agree that it is 'questionable whether ephemeral developments' (that is, the supposed enmity between Athens and Delphi) 'could have had such an influence' at Athens as to explain the way in which Apollo is handled by Euripides.[73] After all, the beginning of the Peloponnesian war, and even the plague, were nearly two decades in the past at the date of the production of the *Ion*. Some of the problems generated by a straightforward political interpretation of the motivation for Apollo's presentation in the play are lessened by seeing the plot of the *Ion* as more vaguely 'parallel' to the story of Athenian worries about Delphi during the Archidamian War, and the apparent resolution of those worries with the Peace of Nicias (421): the Athenian hero Ion experiences disillusion with his master Apollo but eventually the alienated parties become

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patron in place of Delian Apollo', but this is too sharp, see Shapiro 1996: 102ff. and Hornblower 1992: 183. On the *temene* of 'Apollo and Poseidon' and 'Ion' epigraphically attested on Aegina and Samos respectively see above, ch. 2, pp. 52–4 and n. 37.

[70] On this episode, see Smarczyk 1990: 504–25; Hornblower 1991: 517–31 and 1992, 194–97, also Brock 1996. For the *Heracles*, see Bond 1981: 241.

[71] Pfeiffer 1960: 70 [1952: 31].

[72] Hence the stipulations about access to the oracle in the Athenian-Spartan armistice of 423 BC and in the Peace of Nicias: Th. 4.118.1, 5.18.1.

[73] Bierl 1994: 84.

reconciled. But even this more refined political interpretation involves a slippage of a decade between the political events in question and the date of the play which supposedly offers a parallel treatment to those events.[74]

It is in fact an error to treat Euripides as crudely and patriotically criticizing the gods of Greek religion, as opposed to a dramatist exploring the implications of his own artistic creation.[75] In particular, worries about Apollo's 'less than admirable profile in extant tragedy' are to some extent misconceived, insofar as they start from the stated or unstated premise that Apollo is a symbol of unimpeachable moral authority.[76] A sensible move at this point would be to invoke not political but intellectual developments at Athens, namely the questioning mood associated with the sophists, and their impatience with traditional theology.[77] But this does not account for what, as Plato and C.P. Cavafy recognized, was one of the strongest denunciations of Apollo in all tragedy, the fragment from an unidentified play of Aeschylus which I have used as the epigraph to the present chapter.[78] Chronological considerations rule out sophistic influence on Aeschylus. The ultimate precursor of Thetis' denunciation of Apollo is the speech of Hera at Hom. *Il.* 24.62–3. Clearly, Aeschylus' vision is very different and more powerful in that it is, firstly, put into the mouth of the grieving mother and, secondly, after the death of Achilles.

More recent and sophisticated analyses have, in effect, reformulated the problem, asking not 'why is Euripides so hostile to Apollo?' but 'why is Apollo, with all his complexities and ambiguities,[79] so favourite a theme in Athenian art and literature of the second half of the fifth century BC?'. Art-historians, following a cue of Wilamowitz (who was thinking above all of Aeschylus' *Oresteia* and the *Oedipus*

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[74] Furley 1996: 82, who admits that 'the play may be as much as ten years later than the Peace of Nicias'. For the date of *Ion*, see above ch. 1.2.

[75] Erbse 1975: 51.

[76] Davies 1997a: 49, and see further below. Pindar's Apollo perhaps comes closest to complete uprightness; see Young 1968, 34 and Segal 1986: 27. But we cannot argue from this that.

[77] Leimbach 1971: 133, but see Erbse 1975: 50. On Leimbach's dissertation, see Whittle 1973. See below ch. 4.3.

[78] Fr. 350 *TGrF*, quoted by Plato *Rep.* 383 and re-quoted and then reworked by Cavafy in his powerful 1904 poem Ἀπιστία (Translated as 'Unfaithfulness' in Keeley & Sherrard 1998: 13).

[79] Cf. Moret 1982: 121–26, 'l'ambiguité d'Apollon'.

Tyrannus of Sophocles) speak of the 'apollonization' of mythical imagery in this period.[80] The same useful word can, in a return to the original literary preoccupations of Wilamowitz, be applied to the Euripidean tragedies of the period, in which Apollo is especially prominent.

It is perhaps the prominence, rather than the unflattering representation, which needs to be explained. If we start from the premise that, for the understanding of Greek or at least Apolline religion, divine power is more conspicuous than the 'moral dimension',[81] we shall find it easier to understand why so ambiguously powerful a god should so intensely have preoccupied fifth-century Athens, a phenomenally high-achieving culture which has recently been characterized as engaged in 'a balancing act without net between euphoric self-assertion and profound self-doubt'.[82] In particular, the existence of the oracle at Delphi, with its unrivalled panhellenic prestige, meant that Apollo's power was displayed in an obvious and immediate form: this was a god, one might say, in a state of permanent epiphany. To that extent, those modern accounts which stress the predominantly oracular role of Apollo in Greek tragedy are justified.[83] That is perhaps as far as it is possible and safe to press a broadly 'historical' explanation of tragic interest in Apollo's power.

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[80] Moret 1982: 130 and n. 99 citing Wilamowitz 1896: 246–56 and 1920: 83–7; Shapiro 1998. Moret notes, for instance (129), that at this period Apollo is included for the first time in mythical scenes in which he had previously played no part, such as the Judgment of Paris; and note the remarkable pyxis from Heidelberg (Moret 118, plate 5) in which he actually replaces Dionysus in a representation of Pentheus and the Maenads.

[81] Davies 1997a: 57–8, esp. his final and sweeping statement at 58: 'Greek gods are powers first, persons second, and moral agents a long way third'. This is perhaps not quite true across the board: it would certainly be hard to justify writing a book called 'The Justice of Apollo' but it has been shown (Lloyd-Jones 1983a) that there was such a thing as the 'Justice of Zeus'. But Davies is surely right to insist that 'Apollo' should be considered as 'the whole portfolio of attributes and powers, spread through the Greek-speaking world and beyond, not "owned" by Delphians or Delians or Athenians but accessible to anyone'. For Moret 1982: 134, 'si Apollon a rallié à lui tous les suffrages, en cette ère de désacralisation, c'est sans doute en raison de l'idéal de justice et de moralité qu'il continuait d'incarner' ('if Apollo has assembled for himself all the votes, in this era of desecration, it is undoubtedly because of the ideal of justice and morality which he continued to incarnate'). But this explanation is precisely what Davies' study, though written without specific reference to Moret, has now placed in question. (He criticises views resembling Moret's at 54).

[82] Hölscher 1998: 183, echoed by the editors at p. 343 ('triumph alternating with uncertainty').

[83] Roberts 1986: 81, approved by Davies 1997: 49–50.

3.4. Ephebic Apollo

But what explanations can be offered for tragic interest in Apollo's ambiguity, as expressed in plays like *Ion*? An important clue lies in one of the three Apolline components with which we began, namely Apollon/Apellos the ephebe, who in Athenian literature and art is the long-haired male warrior who stands permanently on the edge of manhood.[84] (The actual cult position was perhaps different: Apollo Lykeios, whose military and athletic cult at Athens is situated at the Lykeion gymnasium, is 'the god of the initiated, not the initiants'. This Apollo represents not the *ephebe* in transition, but the adult male whose initiation is complete and whose status is therefore no longer ambivalent.)[85] The ephebate, an Athenian institution for the military training of young men, can be connected hypothetically with rituals of initiation.[86] Such in-between or temporarily ambiguous states, states which defy normal classification, are fraught with tensions, anxieties and risks of pollution. They need to be negotiated with the help of correspondingly powerful rites of passage: 'danger lies in transitional states, simply because transition is neither one state nor the next, it is undefinable'.[87] Again, 'if uncleanness is matter out of place, we must approach it through order'.[88] Now Apollo's powers are undoubtedly 'weighted towards the public domain and towards the institu-

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[84] For an ephebic or initiatory view of Apollo in Greek tragedy, see most forcefully Bierl 1994, whose statement of the position is at times too extreme: it is hard not to feel unease when we read (p. 89) that the monstrous Erinyes, who in Aeschylus' *Eumenides* threaten Orestes with pestilence and want to murder him and drink his blood, are 'symbolic expressions of the perils that occur to the ephebes during their state of liminality'. Bierl's starting point is Burkert 1975, a classic study which itself revived a view of Apollo which went back to Harrison 1927. See also Versnel 1985–6: 143–45.

[85] Jameson 1980: 232, noting that Apollo is conspicuously absent from the list of deities invoked in the ephebic oath, Tod 1948: no. 204. This inscription is fourth-century, but for the likelihood that the Athenian ephebate in some form goes back to the fifth century, see Siewert 1977: 102–11 and Vidal-Naquet 1986.

[86] Vidal-Naquet 1986: on this by now famous though controversial view, the future hoplites or heavy-armed male citizens, who will eventually be expected to carry out overt, clearly-defined and religiously-sanctioned civic duties, are prepared for this role by a phase of covert para-military activity on the margins of Attica. Initiation rituals are often characterized by such a temporary assumption of a role which is the diametrical opposite of the role for which the (marginal) initiand is being prepared. An extreme form of male warrior initiation is ritual transvestism, a form of reversal which is classically associated with marginal states.

[87] Douglas 1966: 97.

[88] Douglas 1966: 41.

tion, or re-institution, or social and political order'.[89] It is a familiar sort of paradox[90] that the same god should both preside over civic order, and be simultaneously connected with precisely those transitional states which, because of their dangerous marginality, appear most obviously to threaten that order. Apollo's ambivalence can, at least in part, be explained by his ephebic character.[91] Here, clearly, is a point of importance for the understanding of the *Ion* in particular, where Apolline ambivalence takes an extreme form: on the one hand the god is absent from the play altogether at the most obvious level, in that he makes no appearance; on the other hand he is central to the plot and its resolution, and thus at a profounder level strongly present throughout. It may seem far-fetched to see an absent god as any sort of ephebe—a very human, concrete and down-to-earth status; but the ephebic issue needs to be broadened out so as to include Ion himself, who, as we shall see, is a kind of replica of Apollo (below 3.6). Recent work has stressed the ephebic dimension to Attic tragedy in various ways. The most extreme version of the theory argues that the tragic chorus was actually a performance by ephebes;[92] this has not found universal favour.[93] But it is easier to accept the suggestion that a large number of the heroes of extant epic and tragedy have an ephebic character: Ion is just one name in a list[94] which includes Telemachus, Hippolytus, Neoptolemos, Pentheus, and Orestes. Ion, who is about to enter a new status and a new life at Athens, is one of the more convincing of these ephebic prototypes. Ion's status, like that of Apollo whom he represents, is full of ambiguities: nobody could labour under greater uncertainty than uncertainty about parentage, and Ion's ideas on this subject alter more than once merely during the course of the play's action. It is also possible that Ion's preoccupation with purity, manifested as early as line 96, should be connected with his delicate and intermediate status.

[89] Davies 1997a: 54, cf. 51 on Apollo's 'oracular role as the validator of order in general'.
[90] See above n. 60, citing Detienne 1986.
[91] Versnel 1985–6; Bierl 1994: 84.
[92] Winkler 1990.
[93] Rehm 1992: 26–7; Gould in Silk 1996: 220; Griffin 1998: 44.
[94] Bierl 1994: 84; Vidal-Naquet 1997: 116.

3.5. Apollo the Founding Father

Apollo the ephebic god is a male god whose role affects the male characters in the play; Ion himself can even be seen as Apollo's *Doppelgänger* ('double'). Apollo acts on the main female character in quite a different way, by taking violent possession of her body, a relationship of aggressive otherness. It is this act of rape which ultimately leads to a process of colonization.[95] Now colonization was one of Apollo's main roles throughout Greek history: back in the eighth century BC, the settlers at Sicilian Naxos erected an altar to Apollo Archegetes, Apollo the Founder.[96] When in the closing lines of the *Ion*, Athena, acting as Apollo's emissary, predicts the founding of Ionia by Ion's descendants, the spectators would certainly have recalled the fundamental role which the Delphic oracle had always played in Greek colonization, when individuals or city-states sought counsel from it before setting out on their expeditions.[97] The Spartan consultation of Delphi before sending their colony to Herakleia Trachinia in 426 BC shows that this practice was by no means confined to the archaic period.[98] In *Ion*, Apollo's colonizing role is more than mantic, it is direct, personal and violent. He does not merely predict colonization, he effects it himself, through his violent fathering of Ion. We may compare the concept of 'Apollo the Ancestor', epigraphically attested as presiding deity of the conquering and city-founding Seleucid dynasty in the Hellenistic period.[99] Romantic views of the colonizing process did not expire with the scepticism of the classical Athenian period, as the career of Alexander the Great makes abundantly clear.

One aspect of Apollo's plan relating to the foundation of the Athenian royal line and the subsequent colonization of Ionia deserves special discussion: the name 'Ion', which means 'going', ἴων. Xouthos must, at a minimum, have been told something about what would

[95] For the link between violence and the colonial experience, as expressed in marriage metaphors, see Dougherty 1993: 65, the result of the fertilization of the Erechtheids will be an act of colonization, the settlement of Ionia by the descendants of Ion. See also Dougherty 1996: 259, on the rape of Kreousa as 'a founding act'.

[96] Th. 6.3.1.

[97] See Parke & Wormell 1956: 53–4.

[98] Th. 3.92.5.

[99] *OGIS* 212, with Walbank 1991: 211.

happen to him as he went (ἰόντι, 'to him going') out of the temple.[100] As a result he gives the boy the name Ion (661), thus giving a special twist to what was not an uncommon Greek personal name in the classical period.[101] Such exploitation of the literal meaning of names is not only a favourite Euripidean move,[102] it is an authentic touch, in the circumstances of a visit to an oracle, because personal names in the ancient world often had religious significance (*nomen omen*).[103] This is particularly true in the context of applications to the Delphic oracle about colonization, and the stress on the name 'Ion' is thus appropriate in a play which, as we have seen (ch. 2), has a very marked colonial aspect.[104] Ion's naming by Xouthos is not quite an instance of cledonomancy, divination by means of chance utterances or names,[105] because Ion is given his name by Xouthos, he does not have it already (though see below). But the naming is more than casual word-play. Nevertheless, from Xouthos' point of view the derivation from 'going' is the beginning and end of the name's appropriateness, and it is typical of this play that Xouthos is not actually wrong but has grasped only part of the truth: the audience already knows, from Hermes' prologue, of the link between Ion and the 'settlement in Asia', i.e. Ionia (75), and it will be told explicitly near the end of the play that the Ionians will in the future take their name from Ion (1587).

'Just who first names Ion?' is in fact a very interesting question.[106]

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[100] Note that the person 'going' is not Ion himself, as we might have expected, but Xouthos. This means that we have to understand ἰόντι in line 802, ἐπείπερ πρῶτος ἤντησεν πατρί, 'since he was the first to meet his father'. Lee comments on line 802 that 'the etymology of the name here needs to be derived from a synonym', but this seems to imply, wrongly, that Ion's name derives from a synonym of ἤντησεν, as if Ion were thought of as 'going' (i.e. going up to) Xouthos as the latter emerged from the temple. Lines 661–63 make the position clear.

[101] The name is relatively frequent in the Peloponnese, as well as in Attica and the islands, where one would have expected it to be at home. See *LGPN* vols. I–IIIB. Well-known Ions of Euripides' own time were the versatile writer from Chios and the elegist from Samos, for whom see *ML*: 95. The name Ion belongs to an interesting small category of 'unadjusted' heroic names; see Parker 2000: 56 n. 14.

[102] See Kannicht 1969 on lines 13–5 of Eur. *Helen.* For alternative ancient and modern derivations of the name Ion ('violet'; 'arrow'; 'healing'; 'poison'), see Owen 1939: ix and n. 2; Ruck 1976: 246–52.

[103] Fraenkel 1950, on *Ag.* 687.

[104] Dougherty 1996: 262.

[105] Peradotto 1969: 1–21; Roberts 1984: 14.

[106] Cole 1997: 96 finds the *Ion* unique in its self-referentiality; he argues that 'the Athenian audience . . . is literally present at the creation and the naming of the new

As we have just seen, there is a sense, the most obvious sense, in which Xouthos names him. After all he says, in so many words, 'I name you Ion' (661, cf. 802, 830–31), implying that Ion has so far been nameless, and indeed Ion makes his servile anonymity[107] explicitly clear when in answer to Kreousa's 'who are you?' he replies 'I am called the slave of the god' (308–9). There is another sense in which Hermes names Ion, because he claims at line 81 to be the first of the gods to name Ion, and from the audience's point of view it is Hermes who introduces Ion's name into the play, after which it disappears for nearly six hundred lines. But there is yet another sense in which Apollo names Ion, a sense which does not actually conflict with Hermes' claim, on the one hand, because what Hermes actually says is that he is the first god to call him by the name which is going to be his in the future, οὗ μέλλει τυχεῖν; also because Hermes as we have seen has just predicted categorically (74–5) that Apollo will bring it about that he is 'called all over Greece by the name Ion, founder of the settlement in Asia'. Nor, on the other hand, does this third sense conflict with the idea that Xouthos is the namer of Ion, because Xouthos is moved to his felicitous utterance precisely because the name is religiously appropriate to the Apolline oracle he has just received. In other words, Apollo is indirectly responsible for Xouthos' utterance. But there is clever Euripidean deception at work in all this. Not only has Xouthos been duped into giving Ion a name pregnant with splendid mythical and ethnic associations which extend far beyond the implications of the present participle of a very common Greek verb. The audience has also been deceived, by a nice touch of Apolline ambiguity. Hermes' prediction that Apollo will bring about the naming of Ion, despite its cautious formulation (ὄνομα κεκλῆσθαι θήσεται, 'he will bring it about that he is called', 75), invites the inference that the god will confer the name in person, perhaps by an end-of-play epiphany of the usual Euripidean type. But instead the god works by more devious means, specifically by the agency of Xouthos, so that it is both right and at the same time misleading of Hermes to say that Apollo will arrange for the boy to be called Ion. The ambiguity by which Xouthos thinks he has named the boy, whereas in fact it is Apollo who has done so

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hero in the play's prologue'; his main thesis is that Euripides constructed this version of Athenian-Ionian kinship via Ion for the first time in this play.

[107] See Lee on 309.

at a deeper level and in a more lastingly significant way, is not just an example of familiar overdetermination, rather it is profoundly important in its symbolism: it corresponds to the replacement of Xouthos, the ostensible father, by Apollo as real father.

3.6. Oracle and Play

I shall now offer a survey of the play, focusing upon the most important allusions or open references to Apollo, the misinterpretation of Apollo's words and actions and the subsequent confusion that results as the mortal agents intervene in the god's original plan.

The imaginary setting of the drama is Delphi (5), the sacred precinct of Phoibos, who is said to have control over 'that which is and is to be' (τά τ' ὄντα καὶ μέλλοντα, 7). This is a special place, as the appearance of a deity reminds the audience. Hermes as the prologue-speaker communicates to the spectators the prehistory of the drama: they hear that Apollo violated Kreousa (10–11), who concealed the story from her father, by the god's own wish (14); Apollo then ordered Hermes to carry the baby from the cave to his oracle at Delphi. For the spectators Apollo's concern for his child is thus established, since they are privileged in hearing from Hermes' mouth Apollo's actual words in which he recognises the child as his own and undertakes to educate him after sending Hermes to rescue him (29–36). By the end of this speech Apollo's dual aspect is already hinted at: his use of violence upon Kreousa, on the one hand, but, on the other hand, his care for his son Ion.

Ion appears on stage visually as a replica of Apollo, carrying with him a bow and arrows—but also a broom (102–108).[108] In his description of Delphi he makes use of a lyric vocabulary rich in compound adjectives, which encourages the audience to associate purity and light with the Apolline shrine; this language implies divine presence even after Hermes' exit. The suddenness with which dawn rises, driving the night with the stars to flight (82–85), looks back to the

[108] The bow and arrows simultaneously suggest Apollo the far-shooter and Apollo as symbol of the ephebe who has not yet graduated to hoplite weaponry. See Versnel 1985–6: 143. The broom is a physical instrument of Apolline lustration; see Parker 1983: 212 n. 121 for Ion's laurel broom as a suitably Apolline instrument for expelling and cleansing evil.

suddenness of Apollo's epiphany to Kreousa, and forward to Kreousa's description of the rape in her monody (887–88). The descriptive epithets used are a reminder of Apollo's presence and of his metaphorical association with the Sun-god who sends his blessing to the earth from afar (Ἥλιος ἤδη λάμπει κατὰ γῆν, 'the sun is now shining bright over the earth', 83).[109] Behind Ion's preoccupation with purity, one might also detect the figure of Apollo as the god of purification.[110] Since there is as yet no impurity that we know of, this implication may foreshadow the future development of the plot. But there may also be an allusion to Ion's own intermediate status at a perilous point in the life-cycle.[111] The second part of the monody (112–43) is meant, both verbally and in its structure, to be perceived as a cult-hymn to Apollo, a paian. When in the refrains (125–27; 141–43) Ion calls upon Apollo the Paian, he addresses the god's beneficent aspect, as the healer god who brings prosperity; and he does so in a highly ritualistic mode. In the final part of the monody, Ion draws his bow and arrows in his effort to put to flight the visiting birds, which mar the holy offerings. Perhaps through Ion's resemblance to his divine father we may be offered here not only a reminder of the guardian Apollo, but also a glimpse of the primitive Apollo who killed the Python.[112] In other words, Ion here embodies one of Apollo's ambiguities: simultaneously kindly and protective, on the one hand, and potentially violent on the other.

In the course of his subsequent stichomythia with Kreousa, Ion, upon hearing that a mortal woman claims to have been violated by his god, reacts rationally at first. He tells Kreousa that it would be hard for himself or anyone else to act as her minister, (as he had promised to do, 333–35), and warns against challenging the god to reveal his secret affairs (365, 373, 375–76, 378–79). But in fact, it

[109] Burnett 1962: 102, n. 26 'in the *Ion* the sun is used merely as a suggestive poetic symbol which can give double significance to lines like 1439–40'. Loraux 1993: 198 n. 57, and Zeitlin 1994: 150 n. 36 argue more strongly for the identification of Apollo and Helios in the *Ion*. On Apollo-Helios, see above n. 58.

[110] On Apollo as the god of purification, see Burkert 1985: 147–48.

[111] See above 3.4.

[112] The Python was the dragon supposedly guarding the temple at Delphi under Mother Earth (Gaia), before Apollo; see Sourvinou-Inwood 1987. There is of course a scaling-down here: Ion is facing birds instead of the Python; he is dealing with bird droppings instead of mortal danger; and he never shoots. Compare the Apollo Sauroktonos, a famous statue by Praxiteles which represented Apollo killing a lizard with a stick; Plin. *HN* 34.70.

is not so much rationality as instinctive piety that prevents him from trying to penetrate the hidden domain of the god (contrast 1546–48 where Ion himself proposes to interrogate the god about his own paternity). Still, when Ion is left alone on stage (429ff.), he is clearly shaken, though he continues to use the language of intellect. He now puts a hypothetical case, which is logical enough in form, but which serves to articulate, with greater boldness, his growing doubt and unease. In his effort to overcome the disquieting effect Kreousa's reproaches against Apollo had on him, and to comprehend the immoral behaviour of his beloved god, he makes a covert criticism of divine justice in the form of a conditional phrase (444–51). The criticism of divine justice is a recurrent theme in this episode. Kreousa twice accuses Apollo of being unjust (253–54, 384); Ion agrees with Kreousa that the god is unjust to her friend (335), and later challenges the god's improper behaviour (442, 447, 449–51). On the other hand, Ion defends Apollo when he says that the god would 'justly' (δικαίως, 371) punish the one who delivers an oracle against the interests of the god and later he claims that his service to Apollo at Delphi makes him just (643). Quite frequently Euripidean characters in their effort to reach an understanding of divine justice venture even further to impugn the wisdom of the gods themselves.[113] What makes Ion's criticism at 444–51 so striking is that it comes from the pious temple servant and is directed towards the god he has been serving all his life. Obviously, this is the first time in his life he has been confronted with such a problem and he suddenly becomes sceptical about the god's intentions. Ion is beginning to discover who Apollo really is, in a very complex kind of *anagnorisis* which will scarcely be completed by the end of the play.

The duality so typical of Greek divinity[114] is also suggested in the following choral ode, which asks Apollo's sisters to bless the Erechtheid race with fertility;[115] for the song insists by implication upon the

[113] Cf. *Her.* 339–347, 1087–88; *Hipp.* 117–20; *Bac.* 1348; *Pho.* 86; *Tro.* 884, 469–71, 1280–81, 65–8; note esp. *Bellerophon* (fr. 292); εἰ θεοὶ τι δρῶσιν αἰσχρόν, οὐκ εἰσὶν θεοί, 'if the gods do something disgraceful, they are not gods. See Stinton 1976a.

[114] See above ch. 3.2.

[115] Athena and Artemis are the κασίγνηται of 467, but the line is corrupt. Diggle's emendation κασίγνηται σεμνόταται (instead of the mss reading κασίγνηται σεμναὶ Φοίβου) eliminates the specific reference to Phoibos, in which case the sisters could be merely sisters of each other. But the heavy concentration of Apolline references

double-edgedness of divine *charis*. The chorus dwells on the happiness which children ordinarily bring (472ff.) and there is a clear implication (468ff.) that Erechtheid fertility, so long frustrated, is achievable only through divine, specifically Apolline help: the chorus invites the two maiden goddesses to bless the Erechtheid race with fertility through 'clear oracles' (καθαροῖς μαντεύμασι, 470–71) from oracular Apollo at Delphi. There is irony here, because Apollo has in fact already fertilized the Erechtheids in a more direct sense, namely by violent sexual intercourse (see above 3.5.). So far the mood has been positive, at least on the surface. But then there is a transition to a direct description of the rape after which the chorus speak the violent outrage of bitter marriage-unions, πικρῶν γάμων ὕβριν (506).[116] This is surely a reminder that mortal women who mate with a god suffer painfully because of the encounter, which is thus a very doubtful privilege. This section closes with the reflection that the next generation also tends to suffer (507–9; cf. 1090–91).[117]

When Xouthos declares that Ion is his son, he claims to have heard this directly from Loxias (531). The use of the epithet 'Loxias', 'the Oblique', for Apollo recalls the god's ambiguous utterances and gives weight to Ion's assumption that Xouthos has misinterpreted an obscure oracular answer (αἴνιγμα, 533). To Ion's persistent questioning about his conception, Xouthos cannot supply an immediate answer but seems evidently perplexed (543, cf. 539, 540, 548, 549); in his last expression of bewilderment he uses the verb ἀπαιολᾶι ('to cheat', 'to perplex', 549), a fitting word in the context of ambiguous oracles.[118] The choice of word is, I suggest, highly charged: at 499 the adjec-

in the immediately preceding lines makes it likely that a reference to Apollo should after all be understood.

[116] See Fisher 1992: 413 on *hybris* here: the chorus use 'the appropriate, and strongly condemnatory, term of hybris for the sexual callousness typical of a human tyrant's rape and desertion'.

[117] Literal minded critics might object that the chorus' generalization here is not sustainable; see Owen at 509. The most obviously unhappy products of mixed marriages between gods and mortals are Theseus, Heracles and, above all, Achilles. All three, like Ion himself, have an ephebic character at certain stages of their careers (for Achilles in particular, see Versnel 1985–6: 143 and n. 77), and it is possible that we have here a reference to the travails which heroes must undergo in their passage to adulthood.

[118] The word echoes Xouthos' earlier introduction by Kreousa as Αἰόλου Διός τ' ἄπο (292). This is the only occurrence of the verb ἀπαιολέω in extant tragedy, though the adjective αἰόλος is more frequently found (Aesch. *Supp.* 327; Soph. *Phil.* 1157, *Tr.* 12; Eur. *Ion* 499).

tive αἰόλας is used with the meaning 'changeful, shifting' and refers to the varied tune of Pan's pipes which accompany the rape; the association between αἰόλας at 499 and the verb ἀπαιολάω at 549 is that Apollo now cheats Xouthos just as he had once cheated Kreousa. But Xouthos has complete confidence in his own understanding of the god's oracle. For him the oracular answer is straightforward: the god told him that the person who met him as he came out of the temple would be his child.[119] It was a well known fact that oracular answers were potentially equivocal; Heraclitus' description of Apollo's nature is concise and to the point: ὁ ἄναξ οὗ τὸ μαντεῖόν ἐστι τὸ ἐν Δελφοῖς οὔτε λέγει, οὐδὲ κρύπτει, ἀλλὰ σημαίνει,[120] 'the god to whom belongs the oracular shrine at Delphi, does not say, does not conceal, but gives signs to be interpreted'. The dramatist perceives the dramatic possibilities an oracular response could offer and exploits them to their full extent. He offers us only Xouthos' interpretation of the oracle rather than the oracular response itself. The result of this indirect and veiled revelation of Apollo's will is that, on the one hand, the audience is intrigued by the oracle, while, on the other hand, the playwright leaves room for dramatic manipulation. He here operates in much the same way as in the prologue, where he transmitted only Hermes' interpretation of Apollo's plan rather than having Apollo appear in person and dictate an unequivocal plan to be put into action during the course of the play.

When Ion finally embraces his newly designated father willingly (560), though he had tried to avoid him and even threatened to shoot him with his arrow at the beginning of their encounter, Xouthos is happy that his son is now seeing things in the right light (νῦν ὁρᾷς

[119] To Ion's question whether this child is his by birth or just a gift, Xouthos answers δῶρον, ὄντα δ' ἐξ ἐμοῦ, 'a gift but being born from me' (537). The potential ambiguity of this expression has led some scholars to try to reconstruct the original oracular answer. Owen (p. xx) offers a three-line hexameter response whose last line is οὐκ ἄλλου φύσαντος ἐγὼ σοι παῖδα δίδωμι, 'not being born from anyone else I give you a son', in an attempt to leave room for an ambiguity that might show how the god outwitted Xouthos, without openly lying. Hartigan offers the unmetrical ὁ συναντῶν σοι ἐξιόντι ἐκ τῶνδε τῶν δόμων τοῦ θεοῦ παῖς καὶ δῶρόν σου πέφυκε ἀπ' ἐμοῦ, 'the one who meets you as you are coming out of this temple, a son of the god and a present to you has been born from me' (1991: 76), which, is not, however, to be taken as a serious reconstruction. Any such efforts derive from a scholarly preconception that Euripides would not have openly ascribed a false oracle to Apollo.

[120] Plut. *de Pyth. or.* 21, p. 404D; *DK*, 22B 93.

ἃ χρή σ' ὁρᾶν, 'now you see things as you should', 558), i.e. from his perspective. Yet Xouthos once again falls victim to misinterpretation. It is no coincidence that Ion will start his long speech with an expression that refers to how things seen close up are different from what they seem from a distance; perhaps here we also have a covert reference to Apollo acting from afar and seeing things from a wider perspective, i.e. with an eye to benefiting the Erechtheid house, but oblivious to the consequences his actions may have to particular individuals on a personal level. The differing angles from which Ion and Xouthos face reality are emphasized more insistently after the false recognition scene, in Ion's speech (585–6; 612–14; 621–23) and in the ensuing dialogue. Xouthos acknowledges the problems laid out carefully in Ion's speech, but he has already contrived a plan to smooth the impact of Ion's arrival at Athens. He intends to introduce Ion to Athens, 'purportedly, as a sightseer' (θεατὴν δῆθεν, 656), and entertain him 'as if he were a guest in his house' (ὡς δὴ ξένον ... ἐφέστιον, 654).

The word θεατής is charged, given the constant stress in the play on different ways of viewing.[121] Hermes, after his prologue speech, retires into the laurel grove and assumes the role of a spectator and silent eavesdropper, waiting to find out whether or not his predictions will be realized. Like the human participants of the action, Hermes has only a partial vision of the dramatic reality. The same is true of the Athenian audience, who are constantly given clues about the final outcome of the plot, but never quite know the whole truth until the very close of the play—and even then there are loose ends (see below ch. 4). All have different perspectives of vision; the playwright, by shifting from one perspective to another, aims to offer the true global vision of reality in its full complexity. But he does not impose his authority explicitly. The mortal characters in the *Ion* are simultaneously agents and spectators of different fractions of the divine plan: they contribute to its execution and they suffer from its

[121] The word is found in extant Euripidean tragedy on four occasions only: *Ion* 301, 656; *Supp.* 652; *Bac.* 829. At *Ion* 656, Xouthos plans to make Ion τῆς ... Ἀθηναίων χθονὸς ... θεατήν, i.e. 'a sightseer or a spectator of the Athenian land'; cf. θεάματος, Th. 2.39.1, where Perikles praises Athens over Sparta for being open to all to see. The use of this word suggests that the play is conscious of its own theatricality. The Athenian audience, as part of the world of the theatre, are foreigners at Delphi and at home in Athens, but, simultaneously, are spectators at a distance of the imaginary Athens of the dramatic world.

workings. No organizing mind obtrudes itself to collate their varied experiences and points of view. This is of course bound to be true of the characters in any play, as opposed to the characters in epic or narrative history or a novel, who may be equally ignorant of the whole picture, but who are from time to time the objects of direct and organizing authorial comments and manipulation. I shall argue below (ch. 4) however that Euripides is unique for being extreme among dramatists in the extent to which he employs the 'fracturing technique', as we may call it. What is distinctive about the *Ion* in particular is that even Apollo, the main divine character, does not seem to be in absolute control of the action at all times, but needs to make the appropriate adjustments to bring his plan to fulfillment.

The chorus remain alone on stage and sing a choral ode (676–724) in which they openly side with Kreousa against the two male intruders into the Erechtheid palace. The very first word they utter is ὁρῶ ('I see'), a term loaded with a burden of subjectivity and relativity, coming after the second episode, where Ion has recurrently addressed the problem of the differing assumptions one reaches about reality depending on the distance of the individual vantage-points from the facts in question. In the world of the theatre this word, as it is used here, has a further function; it offers a glance at the events to be dramatized on stage in the following episode: the chorus foresee Kreousa's emotional outburst into tears and cries of lamentation, when she learns that the divine oracle has granted Xouthos offspring. Their efforts to interpret the oracle constitute yet another perspective from which the events performed on stage are examined.

As we have seen, it is a characteristic Euripidean technique to invite the audience to look at events from varying perspectives. This is a means of illustrating the intricacy of reality; and the poet's disinclination to supply clear-cut answers is a means of alerting the audience to the ambiguity and doubleness of this reality. The audience is then encouraged to carry their own search for truth behind the façade, somewhere in between the conflicting views of the characters on stage. But there is a further refinement of this technique here. Euripides invites the audience to witness the reactions of all the characters on stage to Apollo's oracle;[122] yet this oracle is false,

[122] For a contrast with the *Bacchae*, see below ch. 4.2, pp. 163–64. In the *Ion* each character has a true but partial and imperfect view of Apollo; in the *Bacchae* all characters have their own view of Dionysus, but all these views are false.

or at least misleading. It has been contrived by Apollo himself to serve his purpose, which is to neutralise Xouthos when the time is due for Kreousa's and Apollo's son to take up his royal rights in the Erechtheid palace (69–70).

The repetition of the word δόλος, 'trick', in the first few lines of the choral ode (685, 692) encapsulates the chorus' perplexity at Apollo's false oracle. Such incredulity strongly recalls Ion's first reaction to Xouthos' claim that, according to the god's oracle, he is his father. Ion then asked, first, for a witness to verify this claim (532); then, on hearing that this information was based on the god's oracle, he expressed his doubts about Xouthos' ability to interpret the oracle correctly (533; cf. Λοξίας, 'the Oblique', 531). Finally, he carried out a lengthy investigation before he could bring himself, after thirty lines, to accept the validity of the oracle and embrace his newly revealed 'father' (560–61). The chorus, on the other hand, first suspect that there may be some trickery in the oracular answer (685), and then accuse Ion, the foreigner, of having contrived some deceitful scheme (692). The only character on stage who does not question the authenticity of the oracle is the all-too-confident Xouthos; his only worry is how to apply it for his own best interests, but also without vexing his wife with his good fortune (657–58). What will follow in the next episode is Kreousa's reaction to the oracle, a reaction that has been adumbrated in the first lines of the ode.

Upon Kreousa's request the chorus decide, for the first and only time in all extant tragedy, to break their pledge of silence. They announce that they will speak (and thus disobey Xouthos, 666–67), 'even if they die twice over' (760). In two lines they offer their interpretation of the oracle (761–62); in their minds, Xouthos' conviction that he is unexpectedly blessed with a grown-up illegitimate son implies as a consequence that Kreousa is to be deprived of the possibility of future offspring.[123] This misinterpretation triggers a whole new plot, which undermines Apollo's initial plan and almost leads

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[123] See above ch. 1.3. n. 93. The chorus' assumption that Kreousa will remain barren could be an example of what Zeitlin 1996: 91, discussing the language of gender roles in Aesch. *Oresteia* and Eur. *Or.*, calls 'polarized imagination': the mental process by which the negation of one role inevitably entails its opposite. The chorus' reaction can also be seen as a touch of realism: childlessness, as the lead plaques from Dodona reveal, was a frequent subject for oracular consultation. A husband who discovered that he was already a father by another woman might well lose interest in his wife.

to a fatal misrecognition of Kreousa and Ion as stepmother and stepson; but this is narrowly averted by a new series of rescuing Apolline sub-plots. Throughout this whole scene we feel Apollo's invisible presence. Kreousa has brought the old tutor to share with her the θέσπισμα παίδων, the 'oracular announcement about children', which Loxias has proclaimed. The word of the god is the focus of interest. The old tutor, proud of his intellect (742)—in much the same way as Xouthos was (533)—will interpret the whole incident as Xouthos' fabrication (825–27). His account is ingenious; in fact, it is very close to Apollo's actual plan, as reported by Hermes in the prologue.[124] But he makes one vital error in his reasoning; he claims not that the god lied, but that it was Xouthos who was lying all along and planning to put the blame on the god, if his plotting was detected (825–27). But in point of fact the god did lie.[125] In this respect Xouthos and Apollo are very much alike, and the procedure the old tutor imputes to Xouthos—a stratagem for securing the succession to the Athenian throne for his illegitimate son—is very like the procedure actually adopted by Apollo.

The chorus seem convinced by the old tutor's account; they say that they hate evildoers, who plot injustice and by their craft make it all fair-seeming (832–33). But, according to the old tutor's account, it was Xouthos who was doing the plotting (κἄπλεκεν πλοκὰς τοιάσδε, 'fabricated tricks like these', 826), whereas, in their previous ode,

[124] Compare ἐξενωμένον, 'sending it abroad' (820) to λαβὼν βρέφος . . . ἔνεγκε Δελφῶν τἀμὰ πρὸς χρηστήρια, 'taking the newborn baby . . . bring it to my oracle at Delphi' (31–4); τῶι / Δελφῶν δίδωσιν ἐκτρέφειν, 'he gave it to some Delphian to rear' (820–21) to προφῆτις . . . τρέφει νιν λαβοῦσα, 'the priestess . . . picking it up she reared it' (42–3); ὁ δ' ἐν θεοῦ δόμοισιν ἄφετος, ὡς λάθοι, παιδεύεται, 'the boy grew up free to wander in the god's halls' (821–22) to νέος . . . ὢν ἀμφὶ βωμίους τροφὰς ἠλᾶτ' ἀθύρων, 'while he was a boy he used to wander in play around the altars that fed him' (52–3). Compare also 576, 1089; 823 with 53; 824 with 64–8; 829 with 73. Even the report of Ion's name at 830–31 recalls lines 74–5 and 79–80, where Hermes gives Ion's name for the first time in the play. Yet lines 830–31 are a needless repetition of the significance of the child's name (ἴων = coming, see above 3.5.), mentioned by the chorus as recently as 802; hence, Dindorf deleted lines 830–31 and Diggle brackets them; so did Wilamowitz, on the grounds that they are 'meaningless in context' and that they 'contain the Herodotean use of *ana* with an accusative of time'. A better reason for deletion is that the chorus' indignant reaction at 832 follows on more naturally from line 829. I therefore accept that the lines were interpolated perhaps by an actor.

[125] Apollo had been portrayed in tragedy as using trickery before: in Aesch. *Eum.* 149 he drugs the Erinyes with wine, a Dionysiac medium, and thus saves Orestes from being torn apart by them; in Eur. *Alc.* 12 he tricks the fates by similar means.

they had assumed that the reported oracle was the product of Ion's cunning devices, (πλέκει (Diggle) δόλον τέχναν θ' ὁ παῖς, 'the boy weaves a cunning trick', 692). Ion will later use similar vocabulary when he accuses Kreousa of attempting to murder him (ἴδεσθε... ἐκ τέχνης τέχνην οἵαν ἔπλεξεν, 'look... how she has woven one trick after another', 1279f). It is ironic that from this point onwards, it is Kreousa and the old tutor who will resort to the use of μηχαναῖς, 'stratagems', (833) to avenge the injustices suffered (κρυπτὰ μηχανήματα, 'secret designs', 1116; Κρεούσης... μηχανάς, 1216; μ' ἔκτεινεν ἥδε μηχαναῖς, 'she tried to kill me with her plotting', 1326). They are, then, becoming evildoers with respect to Ion. But in Athena's account, even Apollo was obliged to use μηχαναῖς (1565) in order to prevent mother and son from killing each other. Therefore, Xouthos cannot be singled out as a villain on the ground that he is using trickery, for that would imply that all the other characters are villains too. But it is Apollo who has been contriving all these plots throughout, or rather, it is the playwright, since even Apollo is alleged to have had to amend his initial plan to meet the recurrent demands of an ever changing human world (cf. 1565). Apollo had to adapt his plan numerous times during the course of the play. He is, as Hermes implies (67–8), in control of events up to that point, i.e. the beginning of the play; thereafter, he is compelled, by disrupting human action, to improvise. That Kreousa exposed the illegitimate offspring of her violent union with Apollo, and kept the story concealed from her father, seems to have been intended by Apollo (14ff., 340; she also conceals the story from her mother because of 'fear', 898 and 1489). So too is the child's upbringing: Apollo sent Hermes to transfer the baby to the Delphic temple (28ff.). We should also probably assume that Apollo is responsible for Kreousa's subsequent barrenness which brought her and Xouthos to Delphi at the beginning of the play. But Apollo did not anticipate that Kreousa would attempt to kill Ion nor that Ion would launch a pursuit to seize Kreousa and punish her with death. Nor did he anticipate Ion's questioning of the law that gives asylum to those who seek help at the god's altar (1312–19), and his related threat to commit sacrilege and drag Kreousa away from the altar to kill her. Finally, Apollo did not anticipate Ion's persistent doubting of his divine parentage (1522–27; 1546–48) and his determination to extract an answer from the oracle. Apollo deals with these developments by prompting the intervention first of the Pythia, then of the birds and finally of Athena.

By twists and expedients such as these, the dramatist draws our attention to the imperfect control of Apollo and the strength of human emotions.

The extensive use of trickery and deceit, and the passion of human emotions in this play seems to be brought sharply into focus in the Palladion vase painting of Kreousa, an illustration of which appears at the opening of this chapter (see p. 104 above). The Dareios painter decorated this loutrophoros at around 330 BC with a scene depicting Kreousa as a suppliant standing on Apollo's altar at Delphi. On the upper tier, Apollo sits on his swan holding his lyre and above him flies Eros pouring a love potion over him (love-stricken Apollo?). Apollo looks on his left where the female figure with a traveling bag may be Kreousa; on her left, she is overseen probably by the personification of Peitho (Persuasion) holding an umbrella. On Apollo's right, Ion is depicted with a bag at his feet probably containing his birth tokens; he speaks with a female figure, probably the personification of Apate (Deceit). This scene recalls Euripides' *Ion* rather than Sophocles' *Kreousa* which may have been set at Athens.[126] In the *Ion*, Kreousa seeks asylum at Apollo's altar at a pivotal point of the plot, and deceit is intrinsic to the plot. Ion in the process of maturation, like many young heroes in Greek mythology, becomes acquainted with cunning and deceit on his way to manhood, and is aptly depicted here conversing with the personification of Deceit. The pictorial representation by the Dareios painter, close to a century after the original performance of Euripides' play, offers a more sanitized version of Apollo's union to Kreousa. A clear attempt at full restitution of Apollo's morality is here evident. Apollo seems to be courting Kreousa, now chaperoned by Peitho. The divine *charis* will no longer be violent, nor will *hybris* be any longer committed by Apollo in his union to Kreousa. The presence of Peitho guarantees the smooth operation of the divine love affair according to the moral decorum of the fourth

[126] See *LIMC s.v.* Kreousa I, and Schauenburg 1988 for a more detailed analysis of the loutrophoros. Gratia Berger-Doer in *LIMC*, identifies the figure conversing with Ion as Apate. Schauenburg suggests that in the upper tier of the vase appears a collection of divinities. In his reading, the figure on the left of Apollo is Hermes instead of Ion and the figure on the right of Apollo is Aphrodite instead of Kreousa, but he has difficulty justifying the presence of a traveling sack amidst divinities. He rightly identifies the bearer of the incense-burner on the right of Kreousa as Pythia, rather than as the leader of the chorus, and justifies the presence of the numerous wild animals (lion, griffins, panther, snakes) as guardians of Kreousa the suppliant.

century.[127] Apollo's inability to anticipate and check human emotions in the *Ion*, is here turned into Apollo's inability to command his own emotions, as the pouring of Eros' love potion over Apollo seems to indicate. Through this corrective gesture of propriety, the Dareios painter presents the divine father of the Athenians enamored of the Athenian autochthonous queen, and thus falling victim to those same human emotions that he was unable to control in Euripides' *Ion*.

3.7. Apollo as Director?

In *Iliad* 21, Apollo refuses to take up Poseidon's challenge with these words:

> Shaker of the earth, you would think me hardly sane if I were to fight with you for the sake of wretched mortals, who now like leaves break forth full of fire, feeding on the fruits of the earth, and then waste away heartless. Therefore let us give up this quarrel at once and let the mortals fight their own battles (21.461–67).

Apollo, as we have seen (above, n. 17), is the god who acts from afar. This characteristic here enables Homer to pass indirect criticism on the old epic device whereby the gods influence the course of events by taking sides in mortal conflicts. The Homeric heroes, though, maintain responsibility for their own fall insofar as they provoke the gods by an act of arrogance (*hybris*). The acts of mortals are regularly presented as the result of 'double motivation', whereby both the mortals and the gods share responsibility for the course of events. The main human agents in epic may be strongly characterized. For instance, the unexpected vehemence of Achilles' anger, to the extent that he refuses the reconciliation offer made by Agamemnon's ambassadors in book nine, forces modification of the original 'plan of Zeus' (Διὸς βουλή, *Il.* 1.5) and causes the deaths of Sarpedon and Patroklos before Achilles finally rejoins the battle with renewed fierceness and effects Hector's death. Still, we never have the sense that the gods are out of control or absent. Apollo's celebrated departure from Hektor in 22.213 (λίπεν δέ ἑ Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων), is not an absence but a deliberate abandonment.

Tragedians have other options. One is for the dramatist to choose

[127] Cf. also P. *Pyth.* 9, with pp. 113–14 above; contrast *Ion* 506.

a theme which will allow him to avoid direct action by, or characterization of, the gods altogether: one distinguishing feature of epic is fully characterized activity by the gods.[128] The earliest surviving example (472 BC) of this avoidance technique is the *Persae* of Aeschylus. The downfall of Xerxes and the Persians is certainly attributed to the agency of Zeus (see 532ff.), but there is no epiphany and the only supernatural character to appear is Darius' ghost. Another technique is to downplay the element of divine agency. Thus in Sophocles' *Electra* the Apolline oracle instructing Orestes to kill his mother is not actually forgotten, but it is kept in the background. This enables the playwright to present his material more anthropocentrically: the play is about Electra's revenge and the grim brutality of *talio* (vengeance) rather than about the mission imposed on Orestes by Apollo.[129] Yet another technique is to complicate the divine machinery in such a way as to throw more emphasis on the motivation and characterization of the human characters. Thus it has been noticed[130] that in Euripides' *Hippolytus*, Aphrodite's revenge on the neglectful Hippolytus is effected in an extremely complex fashion which involves the deranging of the innocent Phaidra rather than Hippolytus himself, and requires Theseus' invocation of Poseidon, who functions as little more than an obliging destructive force.

The anthropocentricity of Euripides' *Ion* is therefore by no means unparalleled in Greek tragedy, but an exemplification of a generic difference between epic and tragedy. Nevertheless, there are five features which make the *Ion* unusual among Greek and even Euripidean tragedies.

First, Apollo's antecedent rape of Kreousa makes *Ion* absolutely unique in extant tragedy. The physical absence of Apollo from the play needs to be weighed against the closeness of his earlier physical involvement.

Second, the *Ion* is remarkable in giving a voice to the victim of

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[128] See Feeney 1993: 261, actually discussing the difference between epic and historiography. Aesch. *Pers.* approximates to historiography both because it treats real recent events and because of the absence of divine characterization.

[129] Sophocles omits the Erinyes' pursuit of Orestes—a feature of both the Aeschylean and the Euripidean versions; he wrote a play about Electra and Orestes must not upstage her.

[130] Burkert 1979: 111–18; 'If I were Aphrodite I would not trust this assassination machine to work properly.... It does not usually take two gods to kill a man, and Hippolytus is more directly the victim of Poseidon'.

the rape. Pindar had described Apollo's rape of the nymph Kyrene, but we have no 'Kyrene's monody'.[131]

Third, it is unusual that Apollo sends divine emissaries who explicitly and emphatically describe themselves as sent by Apollo, to act (Hermes) or to speak (Athena) on his behalf. Hermes (29ff.) gives the exact words of Apollo's instructions to him, and Athena says she comes 'from Apollo', (Ἀπόλλωνος πάρα, 1556) as his substitute to save him from reproach (1558). In this strong emphasis on the vicarious roles of Hermes and Athena, the *Ion* goes further than those other extant plays where one divine being discloses the will of another; and this is specially remarkable given that Apollo is in a sense the most articulate of all the gods, because of the oracle at Delphi. This point is important and must be justified. The most relevant extant plays are Euripides' *Alcestis, Iphigeneia in Tauris, Electra*, and Sophocles' *Philoctetes.* In *Alcestis*, Apollo challenges Death in the prologue and prophesies that Heracles will appear later in the play (65–71). Heracles acts as Apollo's agent in rescuing Alcestis from Hades, but he is not Apollo's emissary as he is unaware of his plan, and in any case Heracles is not yet a god but is the human guest of Admetus. In the *Iphigeneia in Tauris*, Orestes arrives in the land of the Taurians with the intention of stealing the statue of Artemis from her shrine and transporting it to Attica, as instructed by an Apolline oracle (85–91; see also 1438–42). Athena appears as a *deus ex machina* in this play too, as in the *Ion* and the *Eumenides*; she invokes and validates Apollo's oracle, but she is not his emissary. As the tutelary deity of Athens she has a vested interest in the safe return of the statue of Artemis to Attica; thus, in order to secure the safe return of Orestes, Iphigeneia, Pylades and the statue, she orders Poseidon to calm the sea (1443–45). In Euripides' *Electra* the Dioscuri appear in their capacity as divine brothers of the murdered Clytaemnestra; they are not sent by Apollo or Zeus. They acknowledge Apollo's responsibility in the deed, but refrain from criticizing him (1245ff.). Finally, in Sophocles' *Philoctetes*, Heracles appears *ex machina* to prevent Philoctetes and Neoptolemos from setting off on a journey homewards and sets them back on course for their fated journey to Troy.

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[131] Pind. *Pyth.* 9: Apollo, amazed by Kyrene's beauty and strength (she was wrestling with a lion), feels sexual desire for her, but instead of raping her there and then, goes first to the Centaur Chiron for advice (30–7); after this, Apollo's love for Kyrene is consummated in a single line (66). Pindar gives voice to the seducer (not the seduced) thus extenuating the violence. See above ch. 2.5.2, pp. 94–5.

He tells Philoctetes that he has come to Lemnos to tell the will of Zeus (1415), but there is no indication that Zeus has actually sent him as his substitute.

Fourth, the *Ion* is exceptional because of the extreme political importance of the consequences of the subject matter; as we have seen (ch. 2.2.), the *Ion* has a claim to be one of Euripides' most overtly political plays, so that there is an exceptional tension between the god's actions and decisions, on the one hand, and their earthly consequences which are described in terms almost prosaically specific to the Athens of the historians. The closest parallel is the institution of the court of the Areopagos in the *Eumenides*, but this is not the immediate result of a rape by Apollo himself but the solution to a conflict generated by an act of homicide ordered but not carried out by Apollo, and is, in any case, ordained not by Apollo but by Athena.

Fifth and finally, the working out of Apollo's plan is obstructed, at one crucial point, not by the force of undifferentiated emotion but by emotion combined with rational calculation to achieve a goal beyond and above merely personal interests: Kreousa's plot to kill Ion is not mere impulsiveness but derives from a concern for the purity of the Erechtheid line (1291).

Apollo's grip on the action is imperfect (despite Athena's announcement at 1595 that Apollo 'has arranged all this well') precisely because the human agents, especially but not only Kreousa, have their own ideas about what should happen. Kreousa can, in fact, be seen as engaged in a kind of unconscious conflict with the invisible Apollo. Not for the first time (Aeschylus' *Eumenides*), the young Olympian Apollo is up against a representative of an older (female) power with chthonic associations:[132] taking her cue from the old tutor who serves as a substitute for her dead father Erechtheus, Kreousa plots to kill Ion in an effort to secure the purity of the Athenian autochthonous royal line; like the Erinyes, she ultimately acquiesces in Apollo's victory and like them submits to the mediation of Athena and becomes beneficial to Athens. But Kreousa, unlike the Erinyes but like Ion and Xouthos, is human. And it is her character and those of Ion and Xouthos, and not only the distant workings of Apollo, that determine their fate in the play. Heraclitus' dictum that 'a man's char-

[132] The killing of the Python follows a similar pattern; the Python was a female dragon, also known as Delphyna (*delphys* = uterus), which guarded the oracle at Delphi before Gaia lost her sovereignity to Apollo. See above n. 112.

acter is his *daimon* ('fate' or 'guardian-divinity')'[133] aptly applies to the main dramatic characters in the *Ion*, whose lot is directly influenced by their individual personalities, the choices they make and the consequences of these choices. The god's seeming absence in the years before the beginning of the play and during the course of its action, leaves the human characters trying to work out for themselves what has happened and to act accordingly. This often leads them to misinterpreting the god's true purposes.[134]

After the recognition scene, Ion and Kreousa comment on the mutability of human affairs and in their effort to come to terms with the happy outcome they make a series of references to *tyche*. Since the operation of *tyche* might seem at first sight to be incompatible both with Apolline manipulation and with the personal and sometimes anti-Apolline initiative of the characters, we need to examine the way in which *tyche* is handled in the play. *Tyche* is the way things fall out, and, if one believes in the directing powers of the gods, *tyche* is the result, i.e. it is θεία τύχη, divine chance. Hermes believes that Apollo was in charge of *tyche* up to this point, ἐς τοῦτο, i.e. the point where the play's action begins (67–8; cf. 1368).[135] For the mortal characters the changes in fortune, *tyche*, are not wholly comprehensible but the happy outcome is to be enjoyed (Ion at 1456–57). When Kreousa ascribes to *tyche* her decision to expose her baby, and Ion his impulse to murder his mother (1497ff.; 1501ff.; 1512–15), they seem to be identifying the power of *tyche* as chance, with the power of irresistible human emotions, such as fear (1496) and desire for revenge (not spelled out at 1500 and 1515 but implied); yet emotions are not normally identified with *tyche* as chance, but follow a more intelligible system of causation. Nor are Kreousa and Ion equating *tyche* with Apollo, as Hermes had done, because neither of them has yet fully grasped the extent of Apollo's involvement. Kreousa's exposure of the child was in fact part of Apollo's plan, though Kreousa did not know this at the time;[136] at 1539–45, though, she

[133] Heraclitus fr. 119, *DK* 1951; see Kahn 1979: 260–61. According to LSJ *sv.* 2, *daimon* is 'the power controlling the destiny of individuals', hence 'one's fortune'.

[134] See Lowe 2000: 182–84 for an outline of the narrative of the play in terms of the mistakes the 'three detectives (Creusa, Ion, Xouthos)' make in their inquiries for the missing father, mother or child.

[135] As we have seen, Apollo's plan starts to be upset (calling for divine improvization) only during the course of the play, not before.

[136] By a fine touch of characterization, Kreousa is represented as inconsistent about the presumed consequences of the exposure: at 1493–94 and 1499 she treats

is capable of justifying Apollo's plan to Ion. Ion is more certain about the divine involvement in what concerns his transportation to Apollo's temple at Delphi; at 1455 he recognizes that his rescue must have been divinely arranged, θεῖον τόδε.

If we wished to press the references to *tyche* at 1501–2 and 1512ff., we might want to say that the characters are trying to deny their personal responsibility by claiming that they were in the grip of forces beyond their control.[137] If so, and if Euripides had wished to expose these claims of Kreousa and Ion as fallacious, he could have assigned that task to one of his rationalist characters.[138] But in the *Ion*, a play which lacks an *agon* (verbal contest),[139] Euripides does not take the opportunity so to develop the issue of *tyche* (whether understood as capricious force or as irresistible emotion) *versus* human responsibility. So it seems best to conclude that the comments of Ion and Kreousa are just a way of saying that life is a seesaw: thus Kreousa at line 1505 comments on the way in which bad fortune is succeeded by good, δυστυχίαισιν εὐτυχίαις τε πάλιν, and this evokes the very similar sentiment at 1513 in the mouth of Ion. In other words both speakers here have their minds not so much on the causal or moral responsibility for human troubles as on their unpredictability.

Paradoxically even mantic Apollo shares this inability to predict,[140] at least during the main part of the play's troubled action. Euripides

it as tantamount to infanticide, but at 965 she says that she hoped the god would save his son.

[137] We might compare Agamemnon's attempted self-exoneration in the *Iliad*, where he claims he was subject to *ate*, 'delusion': Hom. *Il.* 19.86ff.

[138] One might compare, for instance, Hecuba's refutation of Helen's claim that it was Aphrodite who was responsible for her crimes (*Tro.* 983–97): Hecuba's preferred explanation is in terms of Helen's lust for beautiful Paris, i.e. she attributes personal responsibility to Helen. This is also the implication of Kreousa's accusation of Apollo at *Ion* 896: Κυπρίδι χάριν πράσσων, 'doing a favour to Aphrodite'.

[139] Ion offers a long speech comparing life in Athens to that in Delphi, but there is no verbal contest with Xouthos on this topic. Parts of Ion's speech are based on false premises about his paternity, about his relation to his supposed step-mother Kreousa and about his future generally, so that it would have been inappropriate to stage a full-dress argument between Ion and Xouthos; see Lee at p. 225. Dramatically, therefore, the speech is a cul-de-sac, though as we have seen (ch. 1.3.) it has importance as expressing the fundamental incompatibility between Ion's life as temple servant and as potential participant in polis life. Lloyd 1992: 10, identifies this as an '*epideixis* scene' for there is no balance in speeches in this scene as typically found in an *agon*.

[140] Contrast the omniscient Apollo of Pindar, see e.g. *Pyth.* 9.44–9; see also Race 1998 on *Pyth.* 3.28, where Pindar seems to have adjusted the Hesiodic myth which had a raven telling Apollo about Koronis' infidelity.

saw the dramatic potential which Apollo's divine lack of comprehension of human troubles might have, and created a play where the characters' strong emotions are hindrances to Apollo's initial plan, thus compelling the god to make changes: the recognition between Ion and Kreousa happens prematurely at Delphi and not at Athens, contrary to Hermes' prediction (71–2); as Athena reveals, Apollo was afraid (δείσας, 1564) that Kreousa might kill Ion and Ion Kreousa, so he resorted to stratagems to prevent a tragic outcome (1563ff.). The dramatist has gone further than Homer did and has not merely criticized the old epic device, but has actually reversed it: Euripides has not portrayed the gods shaping events in the world and determining the mortals' course of action, but instead he has shown how human emotions can determine a god's course of action.[141]

3.8. Conclusion

Euripides has drawn from the tradition of the artistic, literary, religious and cultic image of Apollo—the ambiguities of which we have examined—in order to create his complex literary god. Yet we still need to ask, first, why in this particular play the dramatist avoids the physical appearance of Apollo and presents him only indirectly, juxtaposing the conflicting divine and mortal perspectives. After all, it would have been natural for the god to deliver the epilogue because he has a personal interest in re-instating his son on the Athenian throne and thus sustaining his own control of the aetiological myth that explains the colonization of Ionia. Second, we need to ask why Euripides chooses both to bring out the contradictory aspects of the god (benevolent-malevolent; healer-destroyer; master of concealment and revelation) and also to provide contrasting interpretations of his actions (divine providence-divine negligence).

To address the question of the dramatic consequences of this absence of the ambiguous god, I shall first consider the advantages of bringing gods onto the stage. Divine epiphanies in Greek tragedy serve a number of functions: they address the mortal characters of the play and usually come in the nick of time to prevent an action which would be contrary to divine plans; they justify the outcome

[141] See ch. 4.4 below. See also Cole 1997: 94 that all events in this play could have happened without divine intervention.

of the play, thus calling attention to the play as play; they make prophecies about the future; and they often establish a religious cult, thus bringing the play closer to the time of the audience.[142] In some of the later Euripidean and Sophoclean plays (e.g. Euripides' *Orestes* or Sophocles' *Philoctetes*.),[143] the narrative device of the *deus ex machina* acquires an extra dimension; when the course of events has taken a turn away from the canonical version of the myth, the divine agents make an appearance and reclaim normality. Not all the *dei ex machina* perform all these functions, nor do they all exert the same influence on the plot. More influential gods such as Athena in Sophocles' *Ajax* or in Euripides' *Rhesus*, Aphrodite in Euripides' *Hippolytus*, Dionysus in Euripides' *Bacchae* have a firmer grip on the action of the play; to them the term *didaskalos*, 'master, director (of a play)' can be illuminatingly applied.[144]

In the *Ion*, Apollo is directly involved in the events related in the play, but he is kept at a long distance. He is no *didaskalos* and any influence he exerts on the action is by indirect means, namely by the use of *hypodidaskaloi* (subordinate or surrogate *didaskaloi*, in this case Hermes and Athena).[145] Yet the extent to which the directorial function of the *hypodidaskaloi* may be considered as a successful substitute for Apollo and the extent to which Apollo himself retains his directorial rights in this play, despite his absence, is a matter that needs further examination. In fact Apollo's emissaries have no directorial function whatsoever. Hermes is not portrayed as a dignified god: the information he supplies does not bear much weight and turns out not even to be entirely correct; his function is almost reduced to that of a simple narrator of the prehistory of the drama. But neither does Athena's appearance seem to be able to make a serious claim to any directorial function: she only comes at the point when all the serious conflicts have already been resolved (i.e. the prevention of the killing of son by mother and mother by son) and she seems to function essentially so as to maintain Apollo's distance from the play.

Euripides in fact has composed an essentially anthropocentric play.

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[142] See Mikalson 1991: 64–68; Easterling 1993b; Dunn 1996: 26–44; see also above n. 31.

[143] See Zeitlin 1980: on Eur. *Or.* and p. 55 on Soph. *Phil.*

[144] Segal 1989–90: 398, uses the term to refer to Athena's role in Soph. *Ajax*.

[145] Easterling 1993b: 85. Pythia and the birds in the tent are merely agents of Apollo's plan.

The unexpected variation is that the human emotions of the dramatic characters have a directorial function over the god's plan (at least during the course of the play). The dramatist thus calls attention to the play as artifice; for, whereas in the structure of the myth, Apollo is directing the action of Ion's return to his home in Athens, in his play, Euripides, the playwright god, uses his dramaturgic prerogative to diminish the authorial right of Apollo, the myth-sustaining god; and, through his innovative recycling of the traditional mythic material, he composes a retelling of the story as viewed from the vantage point of the people who are involved in it.

We come now to the question of the contrasting views offered in the course of the play about the role of Apollo in the play. Euripides preserves the traditional mythological setting, but he combines the myth with fifth-century psychology. It is only in passing that the dramatist presents his characters criticizing the gods; his real focus is on the responsibility of the mortal agents. The play is not an exercise in religious criticism, though Apollo's seduction of Kreousa is an act ambiguous in its implications about the god's relation to morality. Euripides offers a study both of a woman who is the victim of supernatural lust, and of the male values that constrain her; the emphasis is upon the woman's role in the procreation process insofar as this lays open the shortcomings and limitations of the autochthony myth. As a result of Apollo's absence, more emphasis is placed upon Kreousa's maternity than upon Apollo's paternity in this version of the Athenian foundation myth.[146] Euripides in the *Ion* explores and exploits the moral ambiguity of divine rape as part (a very important part) of a more general technique of multiple perspective: by giving space to conflicting views of the god's behaviour (simultaneously malevolent and benevolent), Euripides suggests the complementarity of opposites. It is in this light that the variety of other antitheses in the play are to be interpreted: myth *versus* reason, appearance *versus* reality, divine *versus* mortal, male *versus* female, force *versus* persuasion, speech *versus* silence, religion *versus* politics, innocence *versus* experience, Delphi *versus* Athens, tragedy *versus* comedy. The playwright's intention seems to be to show how these oppositions interact; he seems, though, to have provided an open ending

[146] See Loraux 1993; Saxonhouse 1986: esp. 267, n. 26. See also above, ch. 2.

that in failing to supply a clear-cut resolution to all the conflicts delegates the ultimate judgment to the audience.

Finally, we may pass onto the question of what lies behind Euripides' decision to offer different interpretations of the god's behaviour as seen from different perspectives. The dramatist invites the audience to look from a distance at the overall image of Apollo, pointing out to them how in the end all the conflicting views of him expressed in the course of the play by the various dramatic figures are to be taken as complementary to one another. To approximate to a better understanding of the god's nature would entail a consideration of the amalgamation of all the views expressed into one single image of the god, which, of course would retain its ambiguity beyond any logically consistent human interpretation. By restoring the ambiguity of Apollo, Euripides gives a more complete picture of the god in his contradictory tensions, integrating the three components of his history into one single multi-faceted divinity.

Such a complex literary figure may perhaps tell us something about his creator, providing us with a glimpse at Euripides' own interpretation of the world. His vision of reality seems to be profoundly dualistic, i.e. a dialectic between what seems and what is, as in the *Helen*,[147] or, one might even say, pluralistic: there are many conflicting perspectives and interpretations, and some are demonstrably wrong, but none is certain to be right. We may compare the *Bacchae* in which none of the characters has a complete and accurate understanding of Dionysus.[148] What we have in the *Ion* is not a dualistic contrast between a single truth and a single falsehood—interestingly, there is here no *agon* (above n. 139)—, but a pluralistic exposition of many different points of view; this may constitute perhaps a Euripidean reflection on Athenian democracy. And though the playwright wraps up the story with the dramatic device of Athena *ex machina*, the problems between Apollo and Kreousa are not necessarily dealt with in a definitive way by this, at least superficially, happy ending; the dualism of Apollo has been cut too deeply in the course of the play to be bridged by Athena's complacent reassurance about his constant providence during the whole plot (1595). Neither can the rift in the double system of causation and morality,

[147] See Segal 1986: 222–67, on the two worlds of Eur. *Helen*.
[148] See Winnington-Ingram 1948 on Eur. *Bac*.

divine and mortal, be comfortably bridged; the logic of the play is not just there to lead to the happy ending, but it has a thought-provoking function of its own.[149]

It takes a great poet to provide such an unsatisfying and uncomfortable ending. Yet the fact that it is Athena who is brought into this unsatisfactory situation may cut two ways: if the audience give more importance to Athena than to the uncomfortable final situation itself, most spectators will probably tend to believe the story she relates; but if, alternatively, the audience concentrate more upon the uncomfortable situation, they may well end up putting the god's own morality and the Athenian civic ideology into question.[150] Like his god, the patron of poets, Euripides οὐ λέγει, οὐδὲ κρύπτει, ἀλλὰ σημαίνει.

[149] On the ending of the play, see Zacharia 1995.
[150] See Dunn 2000: esp. p. 27.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE *ION* IN THE EURIPIDEAN CORPUS

> Κι όπού κατέχει νὰ μιλῆ μὲ γνώση καὶ μὲ τρόπο
> κάνει καὶ κλαίσιν καὶ γελοῦ τὰ μάτια τῶν ἀνθρώπω
>
> Whoever knows how to speak with wisdom and with style makes the eyes of men weep and laugh
> Vizentzos Cornaros, *Erotokritos* (tr. Trypanis 1971)
>
> Life is full of the comic and is only majestic in its inner sense
> Dostoevsky on *Brothers Karamazov*, letter to a friend (1879)

4.1. Tragic, Comic, Serious

Ion has often been seen as a generic puzzle: is it a tragedy or a comedy or a tragi-comedy, a hybrid? My own conclusion is that the *Ion* is certainly a tragedy.[1] The categories tragedy, comedy or even tragi-comedy do not, of course, exhaust the possibilities. Comic can be opposed to the tragic—though it is not its proper opposite,[2] but it can be also opposed to the serious. Thus, the first flawed recognition scene between alleged father and son has clear comic overtones, witness, for instance the inept and hasty way that Xouthos jumps to conclusions and Ion's alarm and dismay at overtures which he misinterprets; and the main recognition scene between Ion and Kreousa is happy and serious but not comic.

I would like briefly to outline the main argument of my earlier paper on the generic issue by considering why and how the comic episodes are incorporated into the play's more serious and 'tragic'

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[1] Zacharia 1995.

[2] Silk 1998 and 2000: 42–97 persuasively shows that comedy is autonomous; 'Aristophanes' . . . active role in the eventual, momentous process of convergence with tragic drama' (p. 52) is to be seen as an intentional attempt by Aristophanes to arrive at a definition of comedy (p. 97).

scenes so as to produce an integrated and satisfying overall effect. Episodes in the *Ion* that have been commonly identified as having a lighter comic tone ('comic elements')[3] are: the playful treatment of Hermes;[4] Ion's 'business' with his broom and arrows; the contrast between the ordinariness of the Athenian handmaidens and the evocation of the heroic past which they are deciphering on the sculptures of the Delphic pediment; the recognition scene between Ion and Xouthos; the playful laughter aroused amongst the feasters in Ion's tent by the old tutor (1171–73), an obvious allusion to the Homeric Hephaestus (*Il.* 1. 595–600);[5] and, the characterization of Xouthos as a gullible foreigner and a precursor of the *miles gloriosus* of New Comedy.

The identification of such comic episodes and themes in the *Ion* does not, I argue, make the play any less of a tragedy. There is every reason to suppose that fifth-century Athenians knew what they meant by 'tragedy'.[6] And by the fourth century we find in Plato's *Laws* the strongest possible assertion of the need to uphold generic integrity. But it has been recently noted[7] that the same Plato for his own purposes often 'disrupts the generic boundaries'. His method is to '"incorporat(e)" texts and genres into his dialogues' in his act of exploring the boundaries of his discipline with respect to other earlier and contemporary discursive practices: Plato stages a kind of dialogue between different genres in his effort to construct philosophy.[8] Plato thus in a way carries out the program he makes Socrates

[3] I use this term as in Seidensticker 1978: 305 'a general term for the laughable (τὸ γελοῖον) in its manifestations and tones'.

[4] On Hermes' self-characterization as 'hired servant of the gods' (δαιμόνων λάτριν, 4) and the incongruity between his foretelling in the prologue and the outcome of the plot in the *Ion*, see Zacharia 1995: 48. Such a characterization of him was already a commonplace in fifth-century literature; cf. Aesch. *Prom.* 941 (τρόχιν, 'courier', 'messenger'), 966 and 968 (Hermes' λατρεία, hired service, to Zeus), 983 (ὑπηρέτην, 'servant'); Soph. *Inachos* fr. 269c line 35, fr. 269d line 22 (λάτρις) *TGrF.*

[5] See Meltzer 1990, for a list of the comic elements in Homer's works. Taplin in a sequel to his 1986 article and Gredley in his response (Silk 1996: esp. 190–91 and 206ff.), discuss the relationship between comedy and tragedy, especially the curious phenomenon of laughter (γέλως) in tragedy. But they do not discuss *Ion* 528, where the possibility of γέλως is explicitly denied—and thus implicitly asserted; see Zacharia 1995: 54.

[6] Silk 1996: 6; see also the incisive discussion on the definition of the term by Van Erp Taalman Kip 1996: 131–36.

[7] Nightingale 1995: 1–12; quotations from pp. 2 and 5.

[8] For this idea, see Nightingale 1995: 3.

advocate at the end of the *Symposium* (223d 3–9), where he says that the same playwright ought to be able to write both tragedy and comedy; and in some sense, Plato's writings often become a solvent of the whole principle of generic separation. All this means is that to break a rule there must be rules to break, in other words, generic cross-over and experimentation implies the concept of genre.[9] In my view the comic elements in Euripides' *Ion* are simply evidence of experimentation, an enriching device analogous to the experimentation of Plato, and do little to show that the play is anything other than a tragedy. The intentions of the two authors are different, though: Plato is inventing a new genre,[10] whereas Euripides is expanding the boundaries of an existing and well-defined genre.

It is common in modern interpretation of this phenomenon to resort to a comparison between the comic incidents in Shakespeare's plays and those in Euripides' plays. Terms such as 'comic relief'[11] or 'reciprocal intensification'[12] are used to explain the appearance of Aigeus in Euripides' *Medea* or Heracles in *Alcestis*.[13] Thus, for instance, according to Rossiter's interpretation, the opening of the *Ion* with the lighter tone of Hermes' soliloquy and Ion's monody would belong to the same group as *Othello* and *Lear*, which 'open with bawdy laughter at Iago and Gloucester', where 'relief is not *from* but *for* the serious to come'.[14]

Perhaps, though, we need not go so far afield as Shakespearean poetry to find parallels, for an answer may be found in the Euripidean plays themselves. For instance, Euripidean tragedies often show an awareness of the paradox of the theatrical effect, namely the aesthetic pleasure that can be derived from tragic poetry, 'joy from lamentation'. A further effect to be achieved is the easing of pain,

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[9] See Conte & Most (OCD^3, *s.v.* genre) criticizing not only 'attempts to hypostasise genres, attributing to them an existence independent of the particular literary works', but also 'the opposed overreaction, denying the very existence of genres' (p. 631, col. 1).

[10] Nightingale 1995: ch. 1, *passim.*

[11] Rossiter 1961: ch. 14, *passim;* cf. Barnes 1964; Hadow 1915.

[12] Seidensticker 1978: 310 and n. 38, where he refers to Guthke 1968: 66, who 'defines the tragicomic as the synthetic mixture of the tragic and the comic by which the two reciprocally heighten each other'. Cf. the divine scene in Homer, *Il.* 1, which is often seen as mere entertainment, but in fact heightens the tragedy of the mortals; see Griffin 1980; Meltzer 1990.

[13] See also the appearance of the Nurse in Aesch. *Cho.*

[14] Rossiter 1961: 279.

an idea that is as old as Homer (esp. *Od.* 1. 337–38) and Hesiod (*Th.* 52–3; 98–103) and recurrently appears in Euripidean plays.[15] As for the poet himself, as Adrastus in *Supplices* 180–83 argues, if he is to supply aesthetic pleasure through his poetry (τέρπειν ἂν ἄλλους), he ought to work in joy (χαίροντα τίκτειν), or else, 'he cannot—being inwardly distressed—give pleasure outwardly'[16] (οὔτοι δύναιτ' ἂν οἴκοθέν γ' ἀτώμενος τέρπειν ἂν ἄλλους). This claim, though it comes after a lacuna, seems to follow the train of thought of the previous argument,[17] where the implied assumption seems to be that the poor should not feel poorer when looking at the wealthy, but they should learn the love of goods and aim to acquire them, and, similarly, the wealthy should not feel wealthier by seeing the poor, but they should appreciate their wealth and try to retain it. In this way both parties will benefit from the existence of each other, acquiring more noble aims by observation of the other.

Similar observations about the existence of contradictory forces in society, often accompanied by suggestions of possible ways for their harmonious integration, are well attested in the extant Euripidean plays.[18] In the *Ion*, the Euripidean preoccupation with the mingling of contrasts is reflected in the play's very plot-construction.[19] The comic and the serious or tragic elements in the *Ion* are best understood if they are not examined separately, but as part of the same theatrical experience. I would argue that Euripides integrates the comic elements into his tragedies not in order to make the tragic elements seem more tragic, as in 'reciprocal intensification', or in

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[15] Cf. *Hec.* 518–19; *Tro.* 118–21, 472–73, 609–10; *Suppl.* 73–82; also *Med.* 190–203, where the Nurse defines the ideal goal of poetry as the healing of grief; she dismisses the poets of old whose songs did not fulfill this condition, since they wrote songs for revels, dinners and banquets, τερπναὶ ἀκοαί, and had not discovered how to put an end to men's hateful griefs by means of song; the new element here seems to be the emphasis on the therapeutic power of poetry and not just on the peculiarity of the aesthetic pleasure that is commonly derived from this form of art. See Pucci's analysis of this passage, 1980: 21–58; also Segal 1988: 66–7 and n. 57.

[16] Tr. F. Jones, in Grene & Lattimore (Chicago 1958).

[17] Collard, who does not make this connection between the two passages, is forced to assume a much more serious disruption of the continuity of thought than may be necessary. See Collard 1975: esp. vol. 2, 154–55, on lines 176–83.

[18] E.g. Eur. *El.* 380–90, Orestes' speech on how to evaluate a character and the farmer's excellence of character; see Goldhill 1986a; Arnott 1981.

[19] For a list of pairs of constitutive elements in the play's plot-construction, of which the one part is often comic and the other serious or tragic, see Zacharia 1995: 60–1.

order to supply relief from the tragic ('comic relief'). Rather, these elements provide a means for him to communicate and to reinforce some of the themes of the play: the tension between autochthony and Ionianism; the ambiguity of Apollo; women's role in the procreation process and in the autochthony myth; the search for identity and the transition from male adolescence to manhood and from female virginity to motherhood; and, the ambiguous role of the partly-assimilated foreigner. Euripides, like Dionysus in the *Bacchae*, is the dramatist who oversees our theatrical experience, mixing comic and tragic and not revealing the final outcome before the very end of the play, though even then a certain ambiguity remains.[20] Seen in this light, laughter poses no threat to the sort of 'concentrated emotional sequence'[21] characteristic of effective tragedy, because the comic ingredient is not a separate unit, that interrupts, stands out and 'spoils' the tragic mood of the play, but is rather in constant interaction with it, and acquires its precise function as part of the continuous texture of the play.

Therefore, if the dramatist strove to keep matters open to a variety of possible interpretations, modern interpreters too should refrain from attaching labels to this play, since that would result in an oversimplification of a complex and troubling work. The moods and the tones of the play seem to intermingle, rather than exist as separate units. The lighter tone is always in counterpoint with something more sober and there seems to be an intentional undercurrent, of a strategic kind, designed to maintain the interaction between the two, not so much in a relation of 'reciprocal intensification', but as alternative ways of looking at reality from varied vantage points and levels of understanding. The conventional distinction between plays with a happy ending and plays which end in disaster is not coterminous with the generic distinction between tragedy and comedy.[22] In the *Ion*, the problems emerging from the peculiar nature of the relationship between Apollo and Kreousa are not necessarily dealt with by the happy ending. Any simple label attached to the play, classifying it as anything other than tragedy[23] is simply misleading.

The lighter tones of the play are not just there to prepare for the

[20] See Foley 1980: 113.
[21] Taplin 1986: 173.
[22] Silk 2000: 58–9.
[23] For a list of alternative labels, see Zacharia 1995: 46 with n. 3.

happy ending. Rather, the interplay between light and serious has a thought-provoking function of its own. Euripides is delivering a provocative message to his audience: first, he stresses the mythical kinship between Athens and Ionia and gives precedence to Athens as the metropolis over its colonies in Asia Minor at a time of strained relations between imperial Athens and the restless Eastern Greeks; and secondly, after almost two decades of the still-ongoing disastrous Peloponnesian war between Athens and Sparta and their allies, Euripides allows for a closer kinship between Athenians and Dorians as half-brothers, but endows the Dorians with an inferior ancestry.[24] The clear intermingling of moods observed in this play renders the reactionary message more palatable and offers a more integrated vision of the world in a neatly woven performative text.

4.2. Duality

The co-existence of comic and tragic elements in the *Ion* is only one example, but a particularly important one, of the plurality of perspective which is typical of the way Euripides sees the world in general and especially in his later plays. French structuralism has stressed the presence of conflict and ambiguity as an inherent characteristic of Greek tragedy.[25] There is therefore an important sense in which all tragedy is equivocal and dualistic, but it is my concern to distinguish kinds and degrees of this duality.

In this section, I shall use the term duality to refer to significant thematic repetition or opposition. Duality here embraces the juxtaposition of complementary themes and entities (e.g. Athens and Delphi, ch. 1.3; divine pairings, ch. 3.2), polarity between two aspects of the same entity (e.g. Apollo, ch. 3), and reconciliation of seemingly incompatible concepts such as Athenian Ionianism and Athenian autochthony (ch. 2). The simplest manifestation of duality is verbal repetition, that is, where the same author uses the same words in different places in his text.[26] This is a way of making a comparison

[24] See above ch. 2.2.

[25] Vernant & Vidal-Naquet 1988: 29–48; Segal 1986: 80–1, 'the tragedian's story resembles perhaps that of Oedipus or Teiresias; it is the story of a double vision or a double language (*dissai phonai*), of a backstage, of something hidden behind or beneath'.

[26] This is different from the repetition in language observed by Silk 1997: 480–88;

without using the language of comparison, a way of saying that this is like that. I will argue that this duality is a feature of Euripides' late style and that the *Ion* is a particularly good illustration of this late Euripidean manner. But it would be absurd to claim that thematic repetition, mirror-scenes and repetitions in plot-construction (e.g., two lyric monodies by Ion and Kreousa)[27] are unique to Euripides or even to the tragedians. On the contrary, they are found in Aeschylus and Sophocles, they are also found in epic and lyric poetry but also in prose, notably in historiography. Examples from Homer would be the deaths of Patroclos and Hector which are reported in similar language.[28] But the epic narrator has also available the language of direct comparison, as in the many famous similes. Or, to take Thucydides, first there is the technique of indirect comparison by repeated language.[29] But Thucydides can also make his comparisons directly; thus at 7.71.7 he says that events in Sicily resembled those on Pylos more than a decade earlier.

But in the case of tragedy which lacks the presence of a commentating narrator, the only means available to the playwright who wishes to compare 'a' and 'b' is to suggest and insinuate. This can be done in a variety of ways. Hermes in the *Ion* is the closest one can get to the direct mode of comparison: in the prologue, Hermes signposts the similarity between Kreousa's situation and the circumstances of the birth of Erichthonios by saying that she 'observed the custom of her forebears and of earthborn Erichthonios' (20–1).[30] But

there Silk explores the type of 'intensifying repetition' within a single passage that works as a 'marker of compulsion' and emphasizes the inevitability of fate, e.g. Soph. *OT* 1184–85 (οὐ χρῆν ... οὐ χρῆν ... οὐκ ἔδει, 'must not ... must not ... should have not).

[27] See above n. 19.

[28] E.g. *Iliad* 16.857 and 22.363: 'lamenting its fate, leaving behind manhood and youth'; ὃν πότμον γοόωσα, λιποῦσ' ἀνδρότητα καὶ ἥβην.

[29] As for example the last words of 3.49.4 and 7.2: 'so narrowly did Mytilene/the Syracuseans escape danger'; παρὰ τοσοῦτον μὲν ἡ Μυτιλήνη ἦλθε κινδύνου/παρὰ τοσοῦτον μὲν αἱ Συρακούσιοι ἦλθον κινδύνου. The arrival of the second trireme with a revized salvaging Athenian vote ahead of the first trireme that carried news of an adverse sentencing, spares Mytilene at 3.49.4, just like Syracuse is saved by Gylippos' timely arrival at 7.2.

[30] See also e.g. Soph. *Ant.* 595 'the sorrows [in the house of the Labdacids] are heaped upon the sorrows of the dead', πήματα φθιμένων ἐπὶ πήμασι πίπτοντ[α]. This is a way of comparing the present phase of troubles which have befallen Antigone to the misfortunes of her brothers, father and grandfather. This example is not as explicit a comparison because the other members of the family are not actually specified, as is Erichthonios in the example from the *Ion* prologue.

more normally comparison is indicated by the indirect method. The most obvious is intratextual reference, where the same word is used later in the same play;[31] another is the use of Homeric language to suggest comparison with epic ideals;[32] another is the apparently irrelevant choral ode which refers to myths other than the one dramatized and it is left for the spectator to work out the purpose of the intended comparison.[33] Then there is the mirror scene: a dramatic device of repetition of tableaux scenes to enhance the comparison between the two scenes.[34] This device was a standard technique available to all playwrights.

In Aeschylus' theatre there was a convergence of a higher order: the gods resolve different sorts of human issues. They resolve religious issues (such as Xerxes' transgression of fundamental moral prohibitions in the *Persians*), political issues (such as the incompatibility of the claims of the oikos and the polis in the *Septem*), social issues (such as that of marriage in *Suppl.*) and issues of ethics (*lex talionis* in the *Oresteia*). A margin of ambiguity still remains in Aeschylus' tragedies, and the gap between divine certainty and mortal confusion may never be entirely cancelled out within the plays. But we are left with the impression of a unified religiously founded world order which is presented by a coherent poetic vision according to which error finds its precise place as error.

Perhaps as a result of this unified vision, duality is less developed in the tragedies of Aeschylus than in those of his successors. His *Oresteia* exhibits a great deal of significant repetition (its mirror scenes have been fruitfully studied).[35] But the *Oresteia* is *sui generis*, because it is the only surviving trilogy, therefore the use of repetition here has a particular long-range function, namely to bind the individual plays together. In his earlier individual surviving plays, straightforward duality and structural repetition are much less pronounced a feature, possibly because Aeschylus was normally working with trilo-

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[31] See Taplin 1986: 137–38 on ῥυσιάζω, 'distrain upon', in *Ion* 523 and 1406.

[32] See, for instance, Menelaus in Eur. *Hel.* 808, 845, 846, 948–49, 993 with Segal 1986: 232–39. Also see Simonides in *IEG*[2] vol. ii fr. 11 (comparison between the Spartan Pausanias and Achilles).

[33] See, for instance, Coleman 1972: 4–27, on the *Antigone*.

[34] The most famous comparison being that of the endings of Aesch. *Agam.* and *Cho.* where two corpses—in the former that of Agamemnon and Kassandra and in the latter that of Clytaimnestra and Aigisthus—are rolled out of the palace and displayed on the ekkyklema in front of the palace-doors.

[35] See Taplin, 1985: 123–27.

gies and did not employ such techniques on a single play.[36] Some of Aeschylus' plays, most notably the *Prometheus Bound*,[37] exemplify duality in the broad sense mentioned above,[38] namely clash of opposites--opposing forces, opposing principles.

In the case of Sophocles, thematic duality and structural repetition are taken noticeably further. One pronounced narrative device that is particularly associated with his theatre is the use of the two-sisters motif. The dramatist introduces a second female presence as a foil to his main heroine, as in the case of Antigone-Ismene, Electra-Chrysothemis (probably in the fragmentary *Tereus*, Prokne and Philomela were another such duo). This device enhances the characterization of his main heroine which is an aberration from the female norm represented by the other sister. It is a Sophoclean trademark and does not appear in Aeschylean or Euripidean drama.

The 'two-sister' type of structural repetition is an aid to characterization; but there are profound thematic dualities in Sophocles as well and, for example, those in the *Antigone* have been the object of particular study.[39] But by the end of that play, divine law has overwhelmingly prevailed over a mortal pronouncement; Kreon was wrong and has realized his error of judgement. Similarly, in the *Oedipus Tyrannus* (853–58), Iokaste expresses doubts about the gods and the reliability of their oracles but these doubts are not sustained throughout the play; she soon realises her mistake and takes her own life. Sophocles is less concerned with the working out of divine schemes of justice than Aeschylus is; and he is more preoccupied with the individual hero and his/her human struggle between the potential for greatness and the inherent fragility of his/her nature. Typically, the Sophoclean hero is an isolated and exceptional individual in conflict with his/her world. This is true even of *Philoctetes*, although in this late Sophoclean play it is not only Philoctetes but Neoptolemus as well who is faced with choices. His dilemma is a choice between two conflicting value systems, one represented by

[36] An example of structural repetition in the *Persae*, is the enumeration by the chorus, at the beginning and end of the play, of the names of individual Persian commanders (Artembares, Masistes and Ariomardos, lines 29–30, 38; cf. 968, 971–2).

[37] I accept the authenticity of the *Prometheus Bound*.

[38] See n. 25 on French structuralism.

[39] Steiner 1994 explores the tensions between human/divine, male/female, young/old, living/dead.

Philoctetes (and the dead Achilles) and another by Odysseus. The play is intellectually complex and shows clear signs of sophistic thinking akin to Euripidean plays.[40]

In Euripides' theatre, consciousness of sophistic rhetoric is more pronounced,[41] and such rhetoric, the persuasive and technically proficient canvassing of alternatives, is an obvious means by which thematic dualism can be expressed. Typical examples of this feature of Euripidean drama, namely the assignment to his characters of speeches that seem to betray consciousness of contemporary rhetorical techniques beyond what is to be expected of these legendary characters, are for instance, Orestes' speech on manliness and nobility in Euripides' *Electra* (367–400)[42] or Ion's speech on the political life in Athens (*Ion* 585–647) and the opposition of nature and culture, *physis/nomos* (642–44). Such matters are also usually dealt with in the philosophical and rhetorical writings of the late fifth-century intellectual arena. Euripides often uses pairs of opposing speeches to explore some vital thematic concern of the play; this is the so-called *agôn logôn*, a particular feature of the Euripidean drama.[43] Good examples are the debate between Helen and Hecuba in the *Troades* of 415 BC, where Helen seems to be employing in her defence arguments parallel to those employed by Gorgias in his *Encomium to Helen*, only to be refuted on every point by Hecuba (895–1058)[44] or Hippolytus' defence against the charge of rape made by Theseus on the basis of Phaedra's letter (*Hipp.* 916–1101).

Although this very professional way of presenting alternatives is characteristically Euripidean in manner, it is not radically different in kind from plays like the *Prometheus Bound* or the *Antigone* where there are also clashes of opposing views. But what I wish to do now is to examine some of the late Euripidean plays, in particular *Electra* (c. 419–13 BC), *Helen* (412 BC), *Phoenissae* (c. 409 BC), *Orestes* (408 BC), the fragmentary *Antiope* (408 or 407 BC) and the *Bacchae*, to identify some special types of late Euripidean thematic dualities and

[40] See Rose 1976; also Podlecki 1966, on the 'power of the word' and Buxton 1982 on persuasion in *Phil.*

[41] Usher 1999: 18ff.

[42] Goldhill 1986a: 228–29 and 1986b.

[43] Lloyd 1992.

[44] See Guthrie 1969: 192 n. 2.

repetitions in plot-construction.[45] The ultimate aim will be to deepen understanding of the *Ion*.

Several of these plays have been cited by critics as examples of Euripidean innovation; usually this amounts to his radical reworking of a myth, as in the case of the *Electra*, the *Phoinissai*[46] and the *Orestes*, or a dramatization of a variant which is far less known, as in the case of the *Helen* (cf. Ar. *Thesm.* 850, τὴν καινὴν Ἑλένην μιμήσομαι, 'I shall imitate the new *Helen*'),[47] or a novel means of presenting a myth, as in the case of the *Bacchae*, where Dionysus is made a principal character, on stage for most of the duration of the play. But such *mythopoiesis*, creative myth-making, is only one of the innovative features of late Euripidean drama. Others include his strong theatrical imagination; the self-reflexivity of his theatre or his meta-theatrical awareness;[48] his tendency to present on stage people from the lower classes of society (as the farmer in the *Electra*, or the Phrygian slave in the *Orestes*),[49] and characters versed in forensic oratory or sophistic philosophizing; and his tendency to confuse generic categories by introducing comic elements (as in the *Ion*) or by ending his plays in highly paradoxical disaster-averting epiphanies (see esp. *Orestes*). It is typical of these plays that we find a multiplicity of voices and perspectives (see below 4.3).

Thematic duality is at the very core of the *Ion*'s sister play of 412, the *Helen*:[50] there existed two Helens, an *eidolon*, a phantom-image

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[45] See Arnott 1981, on double vision in Euripides' *Electra*; Zuntz 1960, Segal 1986: 222–67, on the two worlds of Euripides' *Helen*; Zeitlin 1980: 62–3, on double-speak in Eur. *Orestes*; Foley 1980: 129–30, on doubleness in seeing in Eur. *Bac.*

[46] Eur. *Pho.* introduces startling changes to the myth in its familiar form, for instance the idea that Eteokles and Polyneikes had agreed to share the rule, one year at a time, and thus the more favourable presentation of Polyneikes who claims the throne when Eteokles' year is up. See Dunn 1996: 180–202 for an intelligent discussion of the 'unprecedented narrative impulse' (p. 180) and the 'openness' (p. 199) of this play. See also below n. 55.

[47] Stesichorus (6th c.) is reported to have composed a palinode, a song retracting his previous accusations against Helen; in his palinode he claims that Helen never went to Troy but the gods sent her to Egypt instead and put a phantom in her place; only a fragment survives, see *PMGF* 1991. A related version is also found in Herodotus (2.112–20). Gorgias composed a famous defense of Helen, the *Encomium of Helen*; so too Isocrates (Isoc. 10).

[48] Goldhill 1986a: 244–64.

[49] See Hall 1997: esp. 123ff.

[50] See Zuntz 1960; Segal 1986: 222–67, on dualism in the dramatic structure of the *Helen*, see his pp. 261ff.; Vasunia 2001: 58–69. For the date and the connection between *Helen* and *Ion*, see above ch. 1.2 and n. 12, listing detailed verbal par-

that was taken to Troy by Paris and thus instigated the Trojan war, and the real Helen who was rescued by Hermes and transported to Egypt, where she remained chaste in the house of the local king Proteus until her husband arrived to reclaim her. In the *Helen*, there is a clear and emphatic contrast between appearance/illusion and reality: the Trojan war was fought to reclaim a mere *eidolon*. Polarization between existence and non-existence is as extreme a polarity as it is possible to imagine. Xouthos in the *Ion* will remain deceived even after the end of the play, but this does not really mean that there is a true Ion and a false Ion (1601–2). Orestes in the *Orestes* (253–77) and Pentheus and Agave in the *Bacchae* hallucinate, but we are left in no doubt that they are on the wrong side of the madness/sanity border.

A special sort of 'duality' has been identified in Euripides' *Electra*.[51] It takes the form of a presentation of alternative views: Klytaimnestra, Aigisthos, Orestes and Electra herself are all seen both through Electra's eyes and also through the eyes of the other participants. As in the *Helen*, only one view is clearly right and the other (Electra's) is distorted and is evidently meant to be discarded. There is a contrast here with the *Ion*, where the alternatives are not prejudged in the same way.

Duality in the *Orestes*, takes a specifically literary form:[52] again and again particular scenes and actions in the play conjure up a *Doppelgänger* ('double') from some earlier treatment by Euripides himself or by a predecessor or contemporary. In this play, the role of Helen corresponds to that of Klytaimnestra in the *Oresteia* and elsewhere, and Menelaus corresponds to Aegisthus, lover and accomplice of Klytaimnestra in the murder of her husband Agamemnon.[53] When Orestes is condemned to death by the citizens of Argos for the killing of his mother, he resorts to violence and attempts to murder Helen, and thus duplicate the killing of Klytaimnestra. Next, he abducts Hermione, trying out a different scenario, similar to an older play by Euripides, the now fragmentary *Telephos* (438 BC), where Orestes himself as a

allels collected by Endhoven. On thematic parallels with the *Ion*, see below 4.4. pp. 178–80.

[51] Arnott 1981.

[52] Zeitlin 1980; Willink 1986: lv–lvi; but see also pp. xlii–xlvi for a list of thematic pairs.

[53] Zeitlin 1980: 52, 'Helen, Hermione and Menelaus all function as doublets and opposites of the primary group'.

baby was held hostage (cf. Arist. *Acharn.*, 425 BC); finally he threatens to burn down the house of Agamemnon, trying out a solution echoing Aristophanes' *Clouds* (423 BC; revized c. 418–16).[54] It is as if the Euripidean Orestes is compensating for his lack of parental role-models by seeking precedents and inspiration for his actions in earlier phases and other treatments of the Atreidai myth, and indeed in other myths altogether. This is very different from the sort of thematic duality that we find in the *Ion* and the difference is surely to be explained, at least in part, by the greater familiarity of the story of the house of Atreus by contrast with the Ion myth, which was a much less frequent subject of drama, however well informed we may suppose Athenian audiences to have been about their own mythology.

Phoenissae is another late play characterized by extensive duality;[55] the most obvious is the antagonism between the two brothers Eteokles and Polyneikes. But there are more subtle dualities too, above all the interplay between past and present. Like *Orestes* this play explores earlier phases of its own myth, but it does so in a less eclectic and frivolous manner. Its approach to the past is more like that adopted in the *Ion*[56] in that it insistently probes the mythical past; thus the Spartoi or Sown Men are a mythical prototype for the coming fratricide.[57] But there is a crucial difference from the *Ion* in that there is no suggestion that the second occurrence of the myth is a healing one.

The fragmentary *Antiope* (?408 or 407 BC)[58] also featured a pair of brothers, actually twins, Amphion and Zethus. Their opposition was not fratricidal but it did, like that of Eteokles and Polyneikes in *Phoenissae*, express itself in a celebrated rhetorical *agôn*. The debate in *Antiope* opposed the quiet contemplative life (Amphion) to the

[54] For the similarity with *Clouds*, see Zeitlin 1980: 70; also, p. 61, the prediction of a double wedding at the end of the play (Orestes-Hermione, Pylades-Electra) picks up Odyssey 4.3–4.

[55] Mastronarde 1994: 6ff., who speaks of 'doubling' of themes (especially that of kinship), and of the 'double-faced relationship of the gods as benefactors and persecutors'. For parallelisms worked out by means of correspondences within the play, see e.g. Mastronarde 1994: 330–31, 342.

[56] Mastronarde 1994: 330 remarks that the use in *Pho.* of myth as paradigm and aetiology is a feature of archaic lyric, revived by Euripides in his later plays. Cf. also Webster 1967: 284.

[57] Mastronarde 1994: 330, noting that the original sin remains and the land cannot be entirely freed from it.

[58] Kambitsis 1972: xxxi–xxxiv; cf. Webster 1967: 163, 205ff.

active life (Zethus) and was appropriated by Plato in the *Gorgias*.[59] This duality was one which Euripides had treated many years before in *Hippolytus* (428 BC), perhaps also in the *Phaethon* (c. 420 BC),[60] and again in the *Ion*. In other respects there are striking parallels between this play and *Ion*: the twins' mother Antiope has been raped by Zeus in a cave before the action begins, just as Kreousa was raped in a cave by Apollo; and at the end of the play the *deus* (in this case Hermes) prophesies that Amphion will build Thebes, much as Athena prophesies colonizing greatness for Ion and his descendants, in Attica as well as beyond.[61] There are obvious differences: above all, the political issue in *Antiope* is treated in the form of a debate between two parties, whereas there is no *agon* in the *Ion*.[62]

The much studied duality of the *Bacchae* is different again. Dionysus is a supremely powerful god but at the same time he is a quasi-human actor who has a large part in the play and is on stage for most of its course. This duality whose elements are mortal and divine can be seen as a direct descendent of the Homeric interplay between men and gods.[63] Such interplay is a crucial element in the duality of the *Ion* as well, but the absence of Apollo throughout the play means that the dynamics of that interplay are very different. In the *Ion*, the god (Apollo) is absent and the mortal characters are trying to guess his will; in the *Bacchae*, the god (Dionysus) is present but the mortal characters cannot see him for who he is, nor can they comprehend him in his full divine might. The closest Pentheus ever gets to seeing the god is precisely when he sees double (two suns, two cities of Thebes, 918–22); the figure he sees has turned into a bull. Similarly, Agave thinks that the trophy of her maenadic hunt is the head of the lion rather than that of her son Pentheus (1174, 1196, 1215, 1278, 1283). Both these characters see something, but they see it as something else. Pentheus' delusion is particularly instructive. He is afflicted by a sort of metaphorical double vision expressed by the language of literal double vision. At some level of consciousness he is aware of the gap in status between the human reality which he sees and the delusion which he sees it as, but he relegates it to

[59] Nightingale 1995: 73–87 offers a valuable discussion of Plato's use of the play.
[60] Diggle 1970: 38–40; 128–29 on 158–59.
[61] Webster 1967: 205 and 210.
[62] See above ch. 3 n. 139.
[63] Foley 1980.

the sub-human and animal category rather than promoting it to the divine. The gap between human and divine is highlighted throughout the play; the dramatic characters provide different, usually erroneous, interpretations of the god and it is only the playwright who seems able to compose a fuller picture of the god.[64]

The duality of the *Ion* thus has precedents and parallels, but it is distinctive. Unlike Helen in the *Helen*, Ion's status is ambiguous but the range of the ambiguity is less extreme than in the *Helen*, where the very existence of one of the Helens is denied. Again there is a dialectic between a single god, on the one hand, and human agents on the other, as in the *Bacchae*. But Apollo and Dionysus function differently in the two plays: there is no question of 'double vision' of Apollo; on the contrary the human agents struggle to achieve any vision of him at all. The *Orestes* resumes and imitates earlier myths to a virtuoso and bewildering extent. This both resembles and is different from the *Ion*. It has been my contention (ch. 2) that there is a sustained parallelism between the action of the *Ion* and one particular cluster of related myths, that of the earlier royal history of the house of Athens, especially Kekrops and his daughters, Erichthonios, and Erechtheus and his daughters. This, in my view, is the fundamental duality of the play. What sets it apart from *Phoinissai* is the fundamentally optimistic way in which the myth performs a healing role the second time around: Ionianism is the new and crucially important factor. Unlike *Phoinissai* and *Orestes*, the *Ion* is a strongly Athenian play, though set at Delphi, and this determines the direction taken by the main strand of mythic allusion.[65]

The Aglaurid myth is alluded to very early in the play in Hermes' prologue. As we have seen, this is an explicit articulation of a comparison which comes close to the direct method of epic or historiography. More information about the fate of Erichthonios and the Aglaurids, and Erechtheus and his daughters is supplied in the dialogue between Ion and Kreousa in the first episode. Then there is Kreousa's monody with its allusion to the Aglaurid myth (above ch. 2.5.2). Erichthonios is specifically evoked in the description of the

[64] Winnington-Ingram 1948: 164–67.

[65] Other myths do of course occur, notably in the parodos where the women are making out the scenes depicted on the Delphic temple, or the allusions to the myth of Demeter and Persephone, for which see Loraux: 1993: 228–30 and Zeitlin 1996: 304–13.

golden snake-necklace, one of the tokens which will enable Ion to be recognized for who he is (1423–25). Finally Erechtheus is said to be reborn (1465). I have argued in chapter two that a key element of the religious and political conception of the play is this repetition of traditional events—not their precise re-enactment, but instead their repetition with a significant difference. Euripides suggests that in the mythic history of Athens the first occurrence was indeed tragic (Aglaurids), but that the second one (Kreousa), by virtue of a fateful change (Apollo's begetting), can become redemptive (Ion) and therapeutic in tone. Another important duality in the play, that between Ionianism and Autochthony, can be seen as a particular expression of this overriding duality. Autochthony is represented as a traditional element, and Ionianism, the novelty heralded by the play and attributed to Apollo, is a kind of graft on this old stock.

The thematic duality between the past myth and the present myth is a duality between a deadly myth and a salvation myth, between the deadly and the life-protecting drops of Gorgon's blood, to use the language of symbols that Euripides himself supplies us in this very play. Kreousa always wears upon her wrist two drops of the magically powerful Gorgon's blood (1009): one is a deadly poison, while the other wards off disease (1005, 1013–15). Significantly, it is explicitly said to have been given by Pallas Athena to Erichthonios at his birth (999–1001); the Aglaurid-Kreousa parallel could not be more clearly drawn.[66] Kreousa, in answer to the old tutor's pedantic question whether she carries the two drops of Gorgon's blood separately or mixed together, says that she keeps them apart 'for the good does not mingle with evil' (1016–17). Indeed, her decision to use the deadly drop, at this critical juncture in the plot of the play, nearly sets the action off in a tragic, fatal direction rather than a lighter, happier one. But her attempt will fail, and Euripides' play, unlike its heroine at this point (later, of course, she will learn), does indeed mingle good with evil. In Euripides' plays there are always two drops of blood.

[66] See above ch. 2.5.2.

4.3. Polyphony and Carnivalesque

So far we have spoken about the existence of two contradictory forces in late Euripidean drama, but in some respects this is too simple: there are not two voices but several, and in a musical metaphor we should speak of polyphony rather than a duet. Thus, for instance, the intrusion of Xouthos represents a *tertium quid*, neither Athenian nor Ionian but a foreigner, or rather a metic;[67] and, Apollo is a multi-faceted and polyvalent god rather than ambivalent.[68]

A near synonym for plurality of perspective is polyphony, a technical term in the literary criticism of Mikhail Bakhtin.[69] Bakhtin nowhere offers a clear definition of his innovative literary concept of polyphony.[70] He does however caution that the musical metaphor of polyphony is only to be understood as 'a graphic analogy, a simple metaphor' and that the similarities between musical polyphony and polyphonic novel end here.[71] According to Bakhtin, in a polyphonic work the author permits his characters to engage in '*a plurality of independent and unmerged voices and consciousnesses, a genuine polyphony of fully valid voices*';[72] he creates a dialogue between the disparate viewpoints and becomes one of the interlocutors amongst equals, without in any way prioritizing his personal viewpoint over others.[73] Bakhtin sets out to prove that Dostoevsky is such a polyphonic author and thus also 'prove the conceivability of polyphony'.[74]

In his study of the generic and plot-compositional characteristics of Dostoevsky's work, Bakhtin traces a number of influences ranging from the adventure plot to the Bible, from Socratic dialogue to Menippean satire, from French to German and Russian literature. This motley of elements was fiercely criticized in the nineteenth century

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[67] Vidal-Naquet 1997; also above ch. 2.4.2. and 2.6.

[68] See above ch. 3.8.

[69] I have used the following editions and discussions of Bakhtin's works: Bakhtin 1968, 1981, 1984; Emerson & Holquist 1986; Morson & Emerson 1990; Holquist & Liapunov 1990; Morris 1994.

[70] This has led to a misreading of the term in scholarly criticism; see the discussion in Morson & Emerson 1990: 231–68.

[71] Bakhtin 1984: 22; Morson & Emerson 1990: 485 n. 3, note that in his literary polyphony Bakhtin does not favour '*simultaneous* sounding' and 'consonance' as expected in musical polyphony.

[72] Bakhtin 1984: 6 (his italics).

[73] Morson & Emerson 1990: 239.

[74] Morson & Emerson 1990: 240.

as 'a crude and absolutely unjustified violation of the "aesthetics of genre"'.[75] Euripides too was criticized by his contemporaries and later by the Alexandrian commentators, and by nineteenth-century scholars, on grounds similar to the critics of Dostoevsky. In the nineteenth century Schlegel, in his hierarchical view of ancient Greek tragedy with its three stages of development, allocated to Euripides the last stage which coincided with the degeneration of tragedy into a 'vigorous yet anarchical debauchery'.[76] And Aristotle in his *Poetics*[77] criticizes Euripides' plot-construction but finds him the most tragic of all the poets (τραγικώτατός γε τῶν ποιητῶν), because by ending his plays with affliction he makes the most tragic impression in performance.[78] His contemporaries and later ancient critics described Euripides' art as 'tangled and complex' (στρεψίμαλλος)[79] and his style as closer to the genre of the oratory[80] and philosophy (ὁ ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς φιλόσοφος, 'the philosopher on stage').[81]

The impact of Aristotelian literary criticism is seen as early as the fourth century (e.g. Antiphanes' *Poiesis*), and during the following centuries the Alexandrian scholars are the continuators of the same line of Euripidean criticism.[82] The scholiasts too criticize Euripides' faults in organization of plot (οἰκονομία), and in character portrayal (aberrations from heroic ethos as in the hypothesis for *Orestes*); they also criticize him for inconsistencies, obscurities, and use of colloquialisms in language. They condemn him for his deviations from the traditional versions of myth,[83] for introducing contemporary political allusions and anachronisms,[84] for using the chorus or the dramatic characters as his 'mouthpiece'.[85] He is frequently chastised for

[75] Bakhtin 1984: 105.

[76] Behler 1986: 342–43. See also Michelini 1987: ch. 1, *passim*. Cf. the theories of K.O. Muller, F.W.J. von Schelling, G.W.F. Hegel, F. Nietzsche.

[77] On Aristotle's references to Euripides in the *Poetics*, see Atkins 1934: 114–15.

[78] *Poet.* 13, 1453a 29.

[79] Arist. fr. 682 *K-A*.

[80] Quintil. 10.1.67–8.

[81] Clem. Alex. *Stromat.* 5.70.1.

[82] This assumption was made as early as 1867 by Trendelenburg who claimed that the literary scholia either independently agree with the *Poetics* or derive from it.

[83] See scholium at *Or.* 998.

[84] See scholia at *Med.* 232, 233; *Hipp.* 231; *Andr.* 445; *Or.* 371. On the political nature of Euripides' tragedies, see also Dio Prus. 35(52).11, 35(52).15.

[85] See scholium at *Hec.* 254, καὶ ἔστι τοιοῦτος ὁ Εὐριπίδης, περιάπτων τὰ καθ' ἑαυτὸν τοῖς ἥρωσι καὶ τοὺς χρόνους συγχέων, 'Euripides is of this sort, assigning to the dramatic characters his own thoughts and mixing the times'.

introducing dramatic characters talking philosophy, as in *Hipp.* 953, where Euripides refers to Pythagoreanism and Orphism[86] and in *Or.* 982, where he is said to 'mingle physics with his plots' like an Anaxagorean philosopher.[87] Comedy and ancient biography too recurrently allude to Euripides' relationship to contemporary philosophers and their philosophical ideas. The reciprocal admiration between Euripides and Socrates is a good example of inference stemming from philosophical ideas found in the plays themselves. In Aristophanes' *Clouds* (1378), Euripides is Socrates' favourite poet; and in the *Suda* and in Aulus Gellius, Euripides is said to have learned moral philosophy from Socrates.[88] In the *Origins and Life of Euripides* 5, Socrates is said to have helped Euripides in writing his plays, as attested in a comedy of Teleclides[89] and in an Aristophanic fragment which may have been included in the first performance of the *Clouds.*[90] Euripides' presentation through the distorting lens of comedy resulted in his representation in ancient biography as a miser and a reclusive poet-philosopher.[91]

As it may transpire from this rapid examination of the reception of the tragedies of Euripides, he was often criticized for introducing into his poetry elements foreign to the genre of tragedy. Dostoevsky in the nineteenth century was also criticized for doing much the same thing in his novels. A preferable literary analysis of Dostoevsky

[86] The scholium at *Hipp.* 953 runs: τοιοῦτος δὲ ἐστιν ἀεί, τὰ ἡρωικὰ πρόσωπα εἰσάγων φιλοσοφοῦντα, 'he is always of this sort, introducing his dramatic characters as talking philosophy'. Euripides was censured also in *Alc.* 962; *El.* 1314; *Pho.* 388.

[87] Anaxagorean influence is also detected in the invocation of the earth and sun at *Hipp.* 601 and in the innovative prayer of Hecuba to Zeus at *Tro.* 884. Euripides' debt to Anaxagoras has been extensively dealt with by Satyrus in frs. 37 i–iii; cf. *Suda* 5, where Euripides is said to have switched from philosophy to tragedy, 'after seeing Anaxagoras running into danger because of the opinions he had introduced' (tr. Kovacs 1994: 11); and see list in Kovacs 1994: 32–9. Cf. also Mantziou 1990, on Eur. fr. 912 N^2.

[88] Cf. also Satyrus, fr. 39ii, a Socratic conception of the gods found in Euripides fr. 1007c N^2.

[89] See fr. 41 *K-A*, Μνησίλοχος δὲ ἐκεῖνος φρύγει το δρᾶμα καινὸν Εὐριπίδου καὶ Σωκράτης τὰ φρύγαν' ὑποτίθησιν, 'that man there is Mnesilochos, who is roasting up a new play for Euripides, and Socrates is laying the firewood' (tr. Kovacs 1994: 3); see also Callias, fr. 15 *K-A*.

[90] Arist. fr. 392 *K-A*.

[91] '*Origins and Life of Euripides*' 23, σκυθρωπὸς δὲ καὶ σύννους καὶ αὐστηρὸς ἐφαίνετο καὶ μισόγελως, 'he was regarded as sullen and pensive and stern, a hater of laughter and of women' (tr. Kovacs 1994: 7); see also *Suda* 6: σκυθρωπὸς ... ἀμειδής ... φεύγων τὰς συνουσίας ... μισογύνης, 'sullen ... did not smile ... avoided company ... hater of women' (tr. Kovacs 1994: 11).

is offered by Bakhtin who claims that 'this generic and stylistic foreignness is made meaningful and even surmounted in Dostoevsky, through the consistent polyphonism of his work'.[92] I would argue that the literary concept of polyphony, understood as the plurality of valid and autonomous voices all heard in a single cohesive piece of literary discourse, applies equally well to Euripidean drama, and that the generic experimentation in Euripides (above 4.1.) is closely related to the polyphonic character of his tragedies. To be sure, Bakhtinian theory needs to be approached critically and selectively. Any application of Bakhtinian terminology to Attic drama needs to be carefully qualified, especially since Bakhtin himself in his writings disregarded the polyphonic quality of the dramatic literature of the Classical period.[93] My aim however is not to engage in a critical analysis of Bakhtinian literary theory, rather to tentatively explore it as a tool to cast a fresh look at the *Ion* as a characteristic example of the mature Euripidean style.

In Euripides, the intrusion of philosophical arguments and the mixing of high and low, serious and comic is more pronounced than in the works of his other tragic colleagues. It has been noted that Sophocles' *Philoctetes* of 409 BC is influenced by sophistic thinking and scholars have gone so far as to label the play as 'melodrama', due to the averted catastrophe and the 'happy' ending.[94] Yet there is no evidence that either Aeschylus or Sophocles ever included comic elements in their dramas. This feature is present in Euripidean plays often classified as 'tragi-comic'. As argued earlier (4.1.), the comic ingredients identified in late Euripidean plays, and indeed in the *Ion*, do not constitute a breach of generic boundaries. Rather, they are

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[92] Bakhtin 1984: 105; see also pp. 14–18.

[93] Hall 1997: 118–24 in her discussion of the 'sociology of Athenian tragedy' includes a section entitled 'polyphony', where she notes that women, slaves and metics are permitted to voice their opposition to the 'hegemonic value-system', and that 'tragedy consists of polyphony and antiphony . . . is dialogic . . . conceals the authorial persona' (pp. 118–19). A heavy influence of Bakhtinian literary theory is strongly implied, but interestingly, no such credit is given to Bakhtin anywhere in the text, notes or bibliography. Such an omission is clearly intentional. Hall borrows Bakhtinian terminology but uses it more loosely, and thus avoids engaging in Bakhtinian criticism. Dunn 1996 duly recognizes his debt to Bakhtinian theory (on 'epic and novel') with respect to his ingenious discussion of Euripidean closure and narrative openness; see pp. 8–9, 127–28 on Eur. *Her.*, and 199–200 on Eur. *Pho.*

[94] Craik 1979. It is also possible that the fragmentary *Tyro* by Sophocles had a 'happy' ending, as the scholium to Euripides' *Or.* 1691 seems to indicate: ἐν Τυροῖ Σοφοκλέους ἀναγνωρισμὸς κατὰ τὸ τέλος γίνεται.

deliberate characteristics of a polyphonic work. Furthermore, this technique of deliberately 'hetero-voicing' the genre is characteristic of the literature Bakhtin called 'carnivalized'. This type of literature is influenced by 'carnivalistic folklore' which pointedly combines the sacred with the profane.[95]

The Bakhtinian notion of the carnivalesque presupposes a presentation of 'the world turned upside down' aptly exemplified in its primary act of 'crowning and decrowning the carnival king', an act meant to underline the temporality and relativity of everything. All hierarchical social boundaries of rank, age and property are joyfully crossed and there is 'free and familiar contact among people'.[96] Ultimate questions about reality, life and death, transfer 'from the abstractly philosophical sphere' to the 'concretely sensuous plane of images and events'. And all these carnival images 'unite within themselves both poles of change and crisis: birth and death, blessing and curse, praise and abuse';[97] dualism is at the very heart of the carnival. Action is set in the public square where people interact freely or on the threshold, be it that of life and death, sanity and insanity, falsehood and truth. Everything is in unfinalized transition; there is no '*conclusive conclusion*' and '*everything is still in the future*'.[98]

According to Bakhtin, tragedy, like all serious genres (epic, history, classical rhetoric), is single-toned and presupposes a finality, stability and wholeness alien to carnivalized literature. I would argue that Bakhtin is wrong to relegate all tragedy to the single-toned serious genres. He does not consider such Euripidean plays as the *Ion* and some other late plays (e.g. *Hel.*, *Or.*, *Bac.*) which not only represent a view of reality strongly characterized by ambiguity, as in most Attic tragedies, but also possess a polyphonic quality normally encountered in carnivalized literature. Criticism on Bakhtinian theory and its assertions about classical literature is not new in classical scholarship; studies have focused on Bakhtin's reluctance to include Old Attic comedy in the serio-comic genres,[99] and on his underrating

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[95] Baktin 1984: 107ff. cites the Socratic dialogue, symposiastic literature and Menippean satire as prime examples of ancient carnivalized literature.

[96] Bakhtin 1984: 122ff.

[97] Bakhtin 1984, quotations from pp. 126 and 134; see also pp. 176–77.

[98] Bakhtin 1984: 165–66 (his italics).

[99] See the excellent discussion by Edwards 1993. Since in classical Athens the utopia of the hegemony of the *demos* was realized, but the ideological hegemony was in the hands of the aristocracy, the political criticism in comedy was directed

of the multivocality of Attic tragedy and comedy.[100] But if the polyphonic character of Attic tragedy can be asserted, the carnivalistic elements are more difficult to negotiate with the serious tone of Attic tragedy. We are not seeking to meet all the Bakhtinian critiria for carnivalized literature, but hope to enhance understanding of late Euripidean tragedy through the study of its similarities to the literature of the carnival.[101]

One of the key features of carnivalized literature is the free invention of new and innovative plots and a move away from the legendary. Euripides does not venture so far as to devise completely new plots.[102] Phrynichus had already paid the price for setting his play too close to the contemporary present,[103] and the days of New Comedy when the subject-matter would be informed by everyday life were still to come. But, although Euripides continued using the old vocabulary of the myths, he went a step further by re-appraising the facts of those myths. In the *Orestes* (395–6; cf. 295; 313–5), the hero's illness, for the most part, is presented not as the result of the divine persecution, but as that of the reaction of his mind to the murder he has committed. The persecution by the Furies, as portrayed in the work of Aeschylus' *Oresteia* (458 BC) and particularly in the *Eumenides*, seems to be replaced by Orestes' mental illness which takes the form of hallucinations in the opening scene of Euripides' *Orestes* (408 BC).[104] Euripides rewrites Orestes' script; the attempted murder of Helen, the abduction of Hermione and the

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towards the *demos*' regime and individual politicians and propounded conservative ideas. This 'ideological appropriation of the popular grotesque' runs against the Bakhtinian model of popular grotesque as 'utopian mockery' which aims to 'assault power and authority as such' (p. 97) that he finds in Rabelais. See also Suárez 1987; Goldhill 1991: 176–88.

[100] See above n.93; see also Edwards 1993: 111 n. 20.

[101] Dunn 1996: 173–79 finds in the extravagant licentiousness in the *Orestes* 'a carnival of forms', though without reference to Bakhtin; the play constantly shifts from tragedy to comedy, and also dithyramb is represented on stage in the song of the Phrygian slave and the chorus; see also 1989: 250.

[102] Though both the *Ion* (above ch. 2.1. n. 1) and the *Helen* (above n. 47) are rare if not entirely new versions of the myths.

[103] See above ch. 2.2, p. 62 with n. 20.

[104] Though Euripides did 'rationalize' the Erinyes as a mental disturbance arising from within, he was not consistent about this. Electra, Menelaus and the chorus elsewhere speak of the Erinyes as real divine beings; cf. 37–8, 316–17, 409–11; cf. 582–84. Dunn 1989: 242 remarks that one of the Euripidean innovations in the plot of this play was 'to associate fear of the Eumenides not with their appearance but with their name'.

threat to burn down his paternal house are all efforts made by Orestes to break away from the constraints of his myth.

Euripides places under pressure not only myth but tragedy as well by challenging its subject matter, its conventions and the character depictions of the figures of the myth. He takes the superhuman out of the myth and deprives the tragic heroes of their heroic status. Or at other times he appropriates the heroic vocabulary and lends it to the most unlikely heroes: a ferocious woman, his Medea, is initially endowed with heroic stature only to disavow it in the course of the play.[105] Furthermore, the figures of the myth were until then predominantly aristocratic, but Euripides was prepared to give more significant parts to humble characters. He gives important roles to the Nurse in the *Medea*, for instance, who utters the prologue, to the philosophizing nurse in the *Hippolytus* (186–97), to the old tutor in the *Ion*, and to the heroic farmer of the *Electra*. And Orestes' soliloquy at *El.* 367–400 stops the action of the play in order to lay down the new system of values for the evaluation of characters.

Not surprisingly, Euripides was ridiculed in Aristophanic comedy for the prominent roles he gave to humble characters in his plays. At *Frogs* 949–50, Euripides is made to say that in his plays 'both the woman and the slave spoke just as much as the master and the virgin and the old woman' (ἀλλ' ἔλεγεν ἡ γυνὴ τέ μοι ξὠ δοῦλος οὐδὲν ἧττον/χὠ δεσπότης χἠ παρθένος χἠ γραῦς ἄν). Aeschylus contends that Euripides ought to have died for doing so, but Euripides retorts that offering equal rights of speech to all characters in his plays was truly 'democratic' (952). Of course, such comic distortions cannot be taken seriously.[106] They are only useful inasmuch as they offer a strong

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[105] See Zacharia 1996; Knox 1979: 295–322.

[106] Aristophanes, though he satirized Euripides and his tragedies frequently in his comedies (e.g. *Ach.*, *Thesm.*, *Frogs*), he recognized his eloquence and superior art; for a full list of Aristophanic passages parodying Euripides, see Kovacs 1994: 66–115. Satyrus, in his *Life of Euripides* fr. 8.ii, lines 12–19 (Arist. fr. 656 *K-A*), remarks that due to Euripides' artistic qualities, 'Aristophanes wishes to measure his tongue "by which such fine expressions are polished"', διὸ καὶ Ἀριστοφάνης ἐπιθυμεῖ τὴν γλῶσσαν αὐτοῦ μετρῆσαι δι' ἧς τὰ λεπτὰ ῥήματα ἐξεσμήχετος. Arethas, in a scholium on Plato's *Apology* 19c (Crat. fr. 342 *K-A*; Arist. fr. 488 *K-A*), records that Ἀριστοφάνης . . . ἐκωμωδεῖτο ἐπὶ τῶι σκώπτειν μὲν Εὐριπίδην, μιμεῖσθαι δ' αὐτόν, 'Aristophanes was ridiculed because, on the one hand he satyrized Euripides, on the other, he imitated him', recalling Cratinus' accusation of Aristophanes as εὐριπιδαριστοφανίζων, 'euripidaristophanist'. Aristophanes is said to have answered: χρῶμαι γὰρ αὐτοῦ τοῦ στόματος τῶι στρογγύλωι, τοὺς νοῦς δ' ἀγοραίους ἧττον ἢ κεῖνος ποιῶ, 'I make use of the neat rotundity of his style but the sentiments I put in verse are less vulgar than his' (tr. Kovacs 1994: 113).

criticism of Euripidean technique here seen as in violation of the common language of the tragic genre. Yet, even if many humble characters are given significant parts in his plays, the social stratification is still maintained.

The *Ion* is a good example of the mature Euripidean style. We have already noted its polyphonic nature with respect to its generic experimentation. But Bakhtinian polyphony entails unfinalized, open-ended time and space. And this is indeed what we find in this rich play. The time is 'crisis time', a momentous point of change and transition.[107] In the *Ion*, the frequent occurrences of νῦν, 'now'[108] are a constant reminder of the urgency of the present and the pressure it exerts upon the characters to act immediately, without delay.[109]

[107] See Segal 1999: 72–3 for the 'dark alternatives' in store for Ion, Kreousa and Xouthos at the beginning of the play.

[108] There are twenty-three instances in the *Ion*, twenty-eight in *Med.*, seventeen to nineteen in *Alc., Hcld., Andr., Hec.*, and twenty in *El.* The instances in the *Ion* are: 426, 558, 562, 564, 609, 654, 699, 902, 945, 975, 978, 1063, 1289, 1341, 1344, 1349, 1380, 1460, 1508, 1511, 1601, 1609, 1612. References to the past: (a) for a long time: 64, 370, (470), 1394; (b) when the time was ripe: 16, 828, 830; (c) a long time ago: 547, 1425, 1375 (it should have happened, but did not). References to the present: (a) now is the time: 1341, 1355, 1612; (b) now you see: 558; unless it is time to see (and indeed it is): 1552; (c) until now: 945, 1349; (d) a reversal of fortune occurs now: 1460, 1508, 1612. References to the future: (a) from now onwards: 1511, 1601; (b) when the time is ripe: 659, 1582; (c) for a long time (explains Xouthos' absence): 1130.

[109] See especially: (a) the false recognition scene between Xouthos and Ion: 'accept your father now' (556); '(dear mother) now, more than ever, I yearn to behold you, whoever you are' (564); (b) the scene where Kreousa and the old tutor contrive the plan of their revenge: 'now, then, kill the son who has been produced at your expense' (978); 'come, it is for you to contribute something now' (984); 'kill him here now, where you can deny your guilt' (1026); (c) Kreousa's suppliant scene: 'sit now upon the altar' (1258); (d) the scene when Pythia reveals the birth tokens to Ion: 'now I am showing you' (1341); 'take them now and labour to find your mother' (1355); (e) Kreousa's change of heart: 'now I gladly clasp the ring upon his door' (1612). Apart from the adverb νῦν, cf. the use of the nouns χρόνος, 'time' and καιρός, 'opportunity', the adjective χρόνιος, 'late', and the adverb θᾶσσον, '(more) quickly', which may also call attention to the pressure of the present situation and the need to resort to immediate action. For instance, when Kreousa says to the old tutor that she has already begun savouring the pleasure of Ion's imminent murder (προλάζυμαι γοῦν τῶι χρόνωι τῆς ἡδονῆς, 'I enjoy my pleasure the sooner', 1027), the implication is that the Athenian queen can barely wait for the execution of their plan; the sooner Ion dies the more pleasure she will enjoy. Such a demand exerts pressure upon the old tutor who is to act as the agent of the murderous plan; wishing to achieve the desired result as soon as possible (cf. . . . ὡς θᾶσσον, 1180), the old man manages to entice the feasters into drinking from the goblets he distributes (so as to make sure that Ion receives the one which he will have spiked with poison), under the pretext that if they exchange their small cups

The dramatic setting too shares many characteristics with the space of carnivalized literature. The space before the Delphic temple is a sacred space whose access to the inner sanctum is strictly regulated but whose precinct is accessible to all visitors. The play opens with Ion engaging in his daily cleaning tasks on the very threshold of the Delphic temple. Indeed Ion's life in more than one sense is a life on the threshold: in his capacity as a temple servant, he is in charge of the space outside the temple, never quite entering it; he is also in transition from adolescence to adulthood (ch. 3.4) and from sanctuary to polis (ch. 1.3). By the end of the play he sets off on his journey to Athens to fulfill his high destiny: the temple servant will soon turn into a king of Athens and future colonizer of Ionia. The same space is a pivotal space for the other main dramatic characters as well: Kreousa fulfills her transition from maidenhood through barrenness to motherhood and Xouthos is granted a son and heir to the throne.[110]

The off-stage space of the tent is a public carnivalized space open to all the Delphians (1140, 1166–8) who feast in shared collectiveness, honouring the crowning of the temple servant and his transition to adulthood and the polis. Laughter appropriately arises in the carnival tent amongst the feasters when the old tutor bustles about mixing and serving the wine in a short comic episode within the larger more serious frame (1171–73).[111] This is a sacred tent (806, 982) and Ion takes due care to prepare it,[112] but profane language is unexpectedly heard (1189). In the course of the symposium celebrating the new beginning, the new life lying ahead of Ion, a narrowly averted murder attempt by Kreousa's old tutor reminds us of 'the joyful relativity of evolving existence'.[113] A similar focus on the relativity of human nature and ideas is achieved through the juxtaposition of antithetical scenes and images.[114] Ion's faith totters on the

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for larger ones, they will get into good spirits sooner (ὡς θᾶσσον ἔλθωσ' οἴδ' ἐς ἡδονὰς φρενῶν, 1180).

[110] See above ch. 2.5.3; see also Segal 1999.

[111] See Zacharia 1995: 55 where this episode is identified as a short 'piece of Old Comedy' within the tragedy.

[112] See above ch. 1.3. n.106.

[113] Bakhtin 1984: 164. This is not the same as relativism which Bakhtin very specifically excludes from the polyphonic approach, as it would render dialogue irrelevant (p. 69).

[114] See above 4.2. and Zacharia 1995: 60–2.

border of impiety when he comes within a hairsbreath of killing Kreousa at the god's altar; and, Kreousa completes her transition from lack of faith to complete reverence (1285; 1609–13).[115] The fates of mortals are ever-changing (1501–17), but the grip of Apollo is also faltering.[116] The relativity, polyphonic quality, multiplicity of tone (mixture of high and low, serious and comic), and open-endedness[117] of the *Ion*, I argue, make a good case for identifying in the play clear carnivalistic overtones.

Furthermore, amongst the numerous instances of laughter in the play we find good examples of what Bakhtin called 'reduced ambivalent laughter' in carnivalized literature[118] where the loud comic aspect of the carnival is reduced and recedes into deeper levels of irony and humour. The laughter caused by the hustling and bustling of the old tutor is louder, as befits the public space of the tent (1171–73). But laughter is muffled and more ambivalent in Ion's monody;[119] or in the false recognition scene between Xouthos and Ion;[120] or after Ion's final recognition of his mother, when he takes Kreousa aside and questions her about the real identity of his father, and supposes that behind the story of her rape by Apollo she hides a more mundane tale (1523–27);[121] or in Xouthos' happy delusion (1602) to be retained for years to come. In Bakhtinian theory of the carnival, laughter has a 'genre-shaping power'; it can comprehend both poles of a phenomenon in the process of becoming and when allowed to shape a scene, laughter 'imparts a carnival sense of change and transition', 'the carnival sense of truth'.[122] According to this reading, each of the above mentioned examples from the *Ion* are better understood as phenomena in transition which have irony at their very core and

[115] See above ch. 2.5.3.
[116] See above ch. 3.6, 3.7, 3.8.
[117] See above ch. 3.8, pp. 177–78.
[118] See Bakhtin 1984: 164–66. See also Zacharia 1995: 48–57 for instances of such laughter in the *Ion*.
[119] Knox 1979: 259 finds here an instance of laughter at a louder register than what I am prepared to accept; see Zacharia 1995: 49; Lee at 112–83.
[120] See Zacharia 1995: 52–55.
[121] This is a portentous moment full of irony, soon to be assuaged by Athena. It is also an authentic and down-to-earth reaction in a traditional Greek society. For an anthropological parallel from mountainous north-west Greece in the 1950's, see Campbell 1964: 110, reporting that a pregnant Sarakatsani girl suspected of incest with a cousin 'claimed that she had been impregnated by divine, not human means, but little attention was paid to this suggestion'.
[122] Morson & Emerson 1990: 464.

entail within them their opposite pole of transition. Notably, the old tutor represents a carnival image himself for in spite of his old age he serves the wine, a task normally assigned to a young handsome boy; soon his disguise is exposed and he is apprehended. Xouthos' all-knowing confidence is void; he remains oblivious to the true outcome of his visit to Delphi, a figure of secular authority deceived by gods and mortals alike. Soon after his joyful monody, Ion will come to question the morality of the god he serves. In answer to Ion's impulse to test the oracle and Kreousa's account of his birth, Athena's epiphany confirms Apollo's begetting of the Ion and thus Kreousa's truthfulness.

Most of all, in Bakhtinian theory reduced laughter is more prominent in the position of the author who places the dramatic characters in these situations and brings them into an open-ended dialogue.[123] The position of Euripides with respect to his play we will examine in the next section, where we will evaluate some Bakhtinian notions of knowledge and sophistic challenges to knowledge in order to show that the carnivalistic overtones in the *Ion* noted above are not entirely gratuitous but relate to the Euripidean attitude towards the pursuit of truth. A comparison of the *Ion* to its 'sister plays' *Helen* and *Andromeda* will also aim to illuminate the state of mind Euripides was in during the time of authorship of these plays in 413/412 BC.

> The truth is one, illusion manifold, and diversity makes a play
> Mary Renault, *The Mask of Apollo*

4.4. Dialogic Vision of Truth

Euripidean pluralism is not merely a literary device; it is a way of getting at the truth about the world. Euripides' approach is both similar to and different from those of the sophists who regard true reality as strictly unknowable.[124] Gorgias had shown in his treatise entitled *On Nature or on the Non-existent*, first, that nothing exists, second, that even if anything exists man cannot know it, and third, that even

[123] Bakhtin 1984: 165.

[124] Wallace 1998 argues for greater differentiation in our treatment of sophists, who were not a unitary phenomenon. They were not confined to Athens and sophistic views changed over time.

if someone could know it, he could not communicate it to anyone else. But with the connecting link between language and reality severed, all that was left was a multiplicity of discourses, no one of which could be proven by any criterion to be truer than any other. From this premise, different sophists drew different conclusions. For example, Antisthenes argued that it was impossible to speak falsely, or for two people to contradict each other,[125] while Protagoras claimed that it was possible to argue for or against any proposition.[126] If truth could not be attained, then only the plausible could be aimed at; rhetoric came to dominate Athenian culture. Some sense of the form such sophistic *agônes logôn* could take is provided by the *Dissoi Logoi*, in which for each of a number of topics opposing arguments are set out.[127] A mordant parody of such contentions is staged by Aristophanes in his *Clouds* as the dispute between 'just' and 'unjust' *logoi*.[128]

The notion that the proper mode of procedure in investigation was the juxtaposition of opposing discourses went on to achieve such success in Athenian culture that it left conspicuous traces even in those genres whose authors did not doubt that knowledge of reality could in fact be attained. Thus Thucydides' *History* can be understood in part[129] as a rhetorical manual, or *logôn techne*, in which pairs of opposing speeches are collected which set out the strongest possible arguments for or against particular kinds of action, in particular kinds of situations (e.g. the Mytilene debate, 3.37–48). And, some decades later, even Plato evidently felt that, whatever form the esoteric philosophical instruction he provided orally to his students within the Academy took, the only mode in which he could publish in writing his views on philosophical issues and make them known to

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[125] See Arist. Metaph. 1024^b 32–4.

[126] δύο λόγους εἶναι περὶ παντὸς πράγματος ἀντικειμένους ἀλλήλοις, 'there are two *logoi* concerning everything, these being opposed to each other', *DK* 80AI. Protagoras wrote *Antilogies*. This view is echoed in Eur. *Antiope*, fr. 189 N^2: ἐκ παντὸς ἄν τις πράγματος δισσῶν λόγων ἀγῶνα θεῖτ' ἄν, εἰ λέγειν εἴη σοφός, 'if a man were a skilled speaker, he could construct a debate between two arguments on every topic'.

[127] *Dissoi logoi* or *Dialexeis* treated sets of polar opposites, such as *agathon/kakon, kalon/aischron, dikaion/adikon, alethes/pseudes* (good/bad, beautiful/ugly or fine/disgraceful, just/unjust, true/false). For an edition of the *Dissoi logoi*, see Robinson 1984.

[128] See *Clouds* 889–1114 on education; on the contrast between old and new education, see esp. 935–39, 960ff.; see also Δαιταλῆς (*Banqueters*, 427 BC) for a debate between two brothers—one virtuous and one evil. Cf. *Frogs* on poetry.

[129] Cole, 1991: 104–12.

unknown readers was in the form of dialogue.[130] After all, Socratic truth was born through dialogue and the interaction amongst people, through the Socratic devices of *syncrisis* (i.e. juxtaposing different points of view on the same topic) and *anacrisis* (i.e. provoking the interlocutor to express his opinion).[131]

So for some of Euripides' contemporaries, plurality of discourses is necessarily linked with the unknowability of reality. But in Euripides' *Ion*, I would argue, truth is not unattainable, but in practice it can be reached via this very plurality of discourses by means of a kind of syncrisis. Truth is the vanishing point upon which all the individual perspectives converge. Or to put it in another way, there is no single truth but there are a number of *converging truths*. Each of the dramatic characters sees only a fraction of reality—in some cases the fraction is very small indeed. If they could find a way to confer and lay open their individual perspectives honestly and uninhibitedly in a genuine dialogue, then they would perhaps eventually be able to reach reality. So too the members of his audience, if they could continue with one another outside the confines of the theatre the dialogue that they witnessed during the dramatic representation, might themselves comprehend better the truth of their own lives.

These are troubled times for the Athenians (ch. 1.1). As argued earlier (ch. 1.2), it is my contention that the *Ion* was performed in the City Dionysia in Athens in 412 BC along with the *Helen* and the *Andromeda*, two plays of rescue and romance securely dated in that year.[132] There are some considerable thematic similarities between these plays which deserve our attention.[133] Both the *Ion* and the *Helen* are dramatizations of rare or innovative plots.[134] The *Helen* and the *Andromeda* share an exotic setting (Egypt; Ethiopia); the *Ion* and the *Helen* share a sacred setting (Delphic oracle; tomb of Proteus). In *Helen*, the heroine appears as a suppliant at the tomb of Proteus to avoid marriage with king Theoklymenos; in the *Ion*, Kreousa seeks refuge at the altar of Apollo to avoid Ion's murdering intentions;

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[130] See Nightingale 1995.

[131] Bakhtin 1984: 110.

[132] The source for the dating for the *Helen* and the *Andromeda* is Arist. *Thesm.* 1012 with schol., 1061, and schol. *Frogs* 53.

[133] See above ch. 1.2. n. 12 for verbal parallels between *Ion* and *Helen*.

[134] On the plot of the *Ion*, see above ch. 2.1. n. 1. On the 'new' version of Helen's myth according to which Helen never went to Troy and the war was fought over her phantom, see above n. 47.

Helen is rescued by her husband Menelaus; Kreousa is rescued by the intervention of Pythia, Apollo's priestess. Priestess Theonoe, Theoklymenos' sister, also intervenes in favour of Helen and Menelaus and conceals their escape from her brother. When he finds out he threatens to kill her, but the Dioscuri stop him, just as the Pythia stopped Ion from killing Kreousa, or Athena stopped Ion from entering Apollo's temple to interrogate him about his paternity. In the fragmentary *Andromeda*, the young heroine is rescued from a sea-monster in Ethiopia by the young hero Perseus and a romance develops; Kepheus, her father, disapproves of Perseus and tries to kill him with the help of an unwanted suitor who pursues Andromeda; the couple is rescued and the romance is allowed to continue probably by divine intervention.[135] Ion is rescued from the unsuccessful murder attempt against him; this time it is not a foreign king, as Theoklymenos in *Helen* or Kepheus in *Andromeda*, who threaten the hero, but his own unknowing mother. The foreign king in all three plays (Theoklymenos, Kepheus, Xouthos) is kept in check by the gods and certainly in at least two of the cases is cheated by the humans: Theoklymenos is told that Menelaus is dead and is promised marriage to Helen if he allows her to complete the burial of her husband, which of course is a stratagem for their escape; Xouthos too is deceived by Kreousa who will pretend to accept Ion as her husband's son and conceal his true parentage, and he is also deceived by Apollo in thinking that Ion is his own son; Theoklymenos' delusion of marriage with Helen is paralleled by Xouthos' delusion of having male offspring separately from Kreousa.

We have already noted some dualities in the *Ion* and the fundamental duality between appearance and reality in the *Helen* (ch. 4.2.); we cannot be certain of any dualities in the fragmentary *Andromeda*, but fr. 114 N^2 presents a literal repetition of Andromeda's words by Echo who was heard off stage during the prologue of the play, a scene duly parodied in Aristophanes' *Thesmophoriazusae* 1018–20. Generic experimentation is not only found in the *Ion* (ch. 4.1.), but also in the *Helen*,[136] and though it would be difficult to draw any assumption about the *Andromeda*, it appears that catastrophe was averted there too. All three plays shared a happy outcome for the

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135 Webster 1967: 198–99.
136 Segal 1986: 266–67.

main heroes. Interestingly, in all three plays, the male heroes are given the chance to recover their identity: Menelaus, the shipwrecked hero, is reinstated as a heroic warrior;[137] Perseus, the pauper, proves himself as the brave Gorgon slayer;[138] Ion, the temple servant, recognises his true ancestry as the son of Apollo and Kreousa, acquires his civic identity and prepares to assume his role as the future king of Athens and colonizer of Ionia. A note of reconciliation towards Sparta is heard in both the *Ion* and the *Helen*. In the *Ion*, we have already discussed the conciliatory gesture towards the Dorians in the prophecies of Athena in the epilogue (ch. 2.2). In the *Helen*, the comments on the futility of war and power of speech for the resolution of conflicts (*Hel.* 1151–60) are at the very core of the play.[139] At the end of both the *Ion* and the *Helen*, some of the earlier oppositions seem to turn to complementarity; in the *Ion*, Apollo is better understood as a compound of the different views expressed about him in the course of the play (ch. 3.8.); in the *Helen*, the distinction between Helen, the life-dispenser, and Menelaus, the violent soldier from Troy with strong associations with the realm of death, steadily progresses towards 'a union of contraries' through the theme of rebirth of Menelaus and renewal of his marriage to Helen.[140] Rebirth is also in store for dead Proteus (*Hel.* 1011–16) and Erechtheus (*Ion* 1465).[141] In the end, both plays at different levels celebrate life and renewal. This positive outlook, the promise of a bridging of opposites in the future and the conciliatory gestures towards Sparta are more reasons in support of the production of these two plays in the same year.

With these similarities between the three plays in mind along with the historical and cultural context of the time, we may perhaps now have a better idea of the frame of mind Euripides seems to have been in while creating these plays for the City Dionysia of 412 BC. To return to the *Ion*, another way of appreciating this play is as a

[137] Segal 1986: 251, 260.

[138] Webster 1967: 199.

[139] On the conciliatory tone of the *Helen*, see Poole 1994: 28–9; 'perhaps a contemporary gloss can be put on the end of the play, which should then be read as a call to Athens to forget past injuries and to be reconciled with the old foe. At any rate, 1151ff. contain an impassioned plea, more general than is found elsewhere in Euripides, for disputes to be resolved by verbal agreement rather than through the folly of war'.

[140] Segal 1986: 247–54; quotation from p. 252.

[141] On Proteus, see Segal 1986: 148–9; on Erechtheus, see above ch. 1.3. p. 53.

microcosm of what Bakhtin termed the dialogical vision of truth encountered in the real world. Euripides creates a world in which disparate views of reality are in dialogue in much the same way as they are in the real world. Matters are not resolved and ends are left loose to be settled, perhaps, in the 'great dialogue' of life which always exists, will exist and should exist in the human world. Euripides stages the dialogical perspective of truth in his play. In his polyphonic work, meaning is to be found amidst the several voices of his characters; a better understanding of the ways of the world will result only from creative dialogue.[142]

Bakhtin's insights on literary discourse are again pertinent here. He identifies two types of discourse: the monologistic and the dialogistic. Monologistic discourse is authoritarian and permits no alternative voice; a single point of view, the author's, is given absolute primacy and as a result the text denies a dialogue with its readers, and remains a closed and finalized text. Dialogistic discourse, on the other hand, encompasses a plurality of viewpoints. The author's viewpoint is only one of the many embodied voices in the text and is in constant dialogue both with the other voices in the text and with its readers, hence the text is open and unfinalized. The prime author of a dialogistic discourse for Bakhtin is again Dostoevsky. In his novels Dostoevsky does not dominate his text by imposing monologically his single-minded view of the world; any one-sided seriousness which may stem from personal experiences of the author (e.g. Dostoevsky as a journalist) becomes only one of the many different voices in the novel. Individual characters may possess one-sided views but 'the author, who causes them to collide in the "great dialogue" of the novel, leaves that dialogue open and puts no finalizing period at the end'.[143] Similarly, in Euripidean drama a multiplicity of voices is heard. We have explored earlier in some detail the different viewpoints about Apollo in the *Ion* (ch. 3.6.) and have observed that no single view is given authoritative prominence. Of course Euripidean thoughts are dispersed in his plays, but the author himself cannot be pinned down to any particular view.[144] The distinction between

[142] Dialogic sense of truth is the second criterion constitutive of Bakhtinian polyphony; the first being the position of the author required for getting at this sense of truth; see Morson & Emerson 1990: 234.

[143] Bakhtin 1984: 165.

[144] Knox in Easterling & Knox 1985: 65.

monologic and dialogic discourse is helpful for the understanding of the grand design of the *Ion*, which can be seen as the triumph of human dialogism over the attempted monologism of Apollo, whose uncompromising initial plan is derailed by the competing programs of the human agents and needs to be adjusted accordingly. In this sense the *Ion* is not only, as we have seen in chapter three, an 'anthropocentric' play, but also a 'dialogistic' one.

But Euripides is different from the Bakhtinian example of the ideal novelist, Dostoevsky, in various ways. Firstly in that, of course, he is operating in a different genre and has to draw his material from the same limited mythic repository as his tragic colleagues. But, more importantly, he does not go as far as Dostoevsky who gives substance or 'life' to his fictitious characters to a degree which allows them actually to contest his own ideology as equals and even to wrest from the author control of the outcome of this dialogue. By contrast, Euripides' directorial touch may still be felt (see ch. 3.7, 3.8.). On the other hand, he never becomes a propagandist, but remains a playwright who invites rather than forces his audience to accept and share his pluralist worldview. Euripidean truth is not contradictory or ambiguous; it requires two or more voices and his plays precisely 'embody' this dialogical vision of truth.

How did he arrive at this position we can only speculate, but I suggest that the answer may lie not just in the general late fifth-century intellectual milieu but in his own individual apprenticeship as a dramatist. During this process, I suggest, and through his observations as a practitioner of theatre, he began appreciating theatre as another way, his own personal way, through which he could reach an understanding of the world. He is not so much interested in attaining the philosophical truth;[145] rather, he offers another vision of the world through his chosen medium of theatrical representation and makes a suggestion about the multi-facetedness of objects, the importance of context, the multiplicity of voices and perspectives and finally the inherent pluralism of reality.

[145] Segal 1986: 265; 'unlike Plato, Euripides has no conviction of ideal truth'.

4.5. Conclusion

We have had more than one occasion in the course of this study to note the ways in which Euripides poses dilemmas to his spectators in all their problematic intensity but leaves it up to them to decide about these issues as they see best. For example, Euripides exposes the limitations of widespread Athenian ideas about the autochthony and purity of their race, and explores the tensions between Ionianism and autochthony (ch. 2). He explores Apollo's morality and responsibility, the ambiguity of divine favour, and the equivocality of oracular responses; he invites his audience to look from a distance at the overall image of Apollo and points out to them how all the conflicting views about him expressed in the course of the play by the various dramatic figures are, in the end, to be taken to be complementary. A better understanding of the god's nature would entail the synthesis of all the views expressed into a single image of the god, which, of course, would retain its ambiguity beyond the logic of any merely human interpretation (ch. 3.8.). The interweaving of tragic and comic elements in this play does not lessen its seriousness but is a testimony of its polyphonic quality. The play cannot be labelled as anything but a tragedy. The happy ending is itself more ambiguous than interpreters have been inclined to allow (ch. 4.1).

It is a characteristic of many successful dramatic authors that they tend to propose questions to their audiences rather than imposing answers upon them: for in an art form performed publicly before large and diverse groups, the play that triggers a lively debate in (and outside of) the theatrical space is likely to be more popular than one that stifles discussion by insisting monologically upon a single truth. Moreover, the competition between the tragic poets at the Festival of Dionysus meant that any playwright who wanted to carry off the victory would have been well advised not to alienate large segments of the audience by attempting to show the falsity of some of their cherished beliefs. And finally, the very form of drama, in which different characters propose their differing views of what is right and proper, and in which the dramatic conflict arises out of the discrepancy between these plausible beliefs, is peculiarly well suited to laying before the audience the variety of opinions that might be held about any issue and testing them in the crucible of action and circumstance.

But, beyond these features common to the whole poetic genre

within which the playwright worked, Euripides in particular seems to have been especially engaged in provoking his Athenian audiences. No doubt this is one reason why in his lifetime his theatrical success was so modest—but this same capacity to stimulate audiences also helps to explain his posthumous popularity. Euripides' plays, at least on the surface, do not give answers: they pose questions. For example, he creates dramatic plots in which the question of the gods is insistently raised, and dramatic characters, under the force of personality and circumstance, give voice to various extreme views on this question; but it would be an elementary error of method to identify any of these views as expressions of authorial opinion. In the light of this fundamental feature of Euripides' poetic art, many of the debates that have characterized particularly the older phase of the reception of Euripides—was he a believer or an atheist? a mystic or a rationalist? a friend of women or a hater of women? a friend of Athens or a critic of Athens? etc.—seem at best misplaced, at worst simply futile. If, as Aristophanes suggested, the dramatic poet must be a teacher not only of choruses but also of audiences (*Ach.* 656–8; *Frogs* 686–7), then Euripides understands his pedagogical mission as requiring him not to convey particular doctrines, but to teach his audience how to think and to look for the truth that lies beneath the surface, to appreciate its complexity and pluralistic nature.

But this does not mean that one cannot discern in the very way Euripides poses his questions the outlines of the kind of answer he himself would most likely have endorsed.[146] So in the *Ion*, Euripides is ultimately inquiring into the nature of the Athenian civic ideology and the value and limitations of the Athenian achievement. It is no accident that this play is so explicit, thorough, and detailed in its account of early Athenian mythology: for Euripides is not remind-

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[146] In fact, Bakhtinian polyphony does not advocate the absence of expression of authorial opinion. 'On the contrary, the author... may participate in the novel's dialogue, principally by creating characters who express various aspects of his ideology... in addition, Dostoevsky's [i.e. the polyphonic author's] perspective is embodied in the form-shaping ideology of the work, with its dialogic conception of truth'; but the polyphonic author 'does not take unfair advantage of his position as author to arrange for the triumph of his own most cherished convictions', Morson & Emerson 1990: 252; see also pp. 232–33. Or in Bakhtin's own words (1984: 67), a work 'without an authorial position... is in general impossible... The issue here is not an absence of, but a radical change in, the author's position'.

ing his audience of a rare legend,[147] rather he proposes an agreed version that can serve as a kind of poetic constitution for the future. Euripides is in no doubt that Athens is a very special city and he is convinced that upon its success depend the hopes not only of its own citizens, but also those of all humanity. But the Athens which he believes in is not the bigoted, narrow-minded Athens which he has inherited, and which is represented in different ways by the one-sided obsessions of the characters with which he begins—Xouthos' trivializing rationality, Kreousa's dangerous emotionality, Ion's ingenuous purity—but instead the purer, humanized, more liberal and generous Athens which he represents by means of the intervention of Athena at the end of the play. When Athena calls herself 'benevolent' (1554) and says that Apollo has done all things well (1595), Ion and Kreousa believe her, and so perhaps must we. That these characters can learn to set aside their fears and to recognise their solidarity with one another and even, within certain limits of course, with the outsider Xouthos, is a lesson of humanity whose import was surely not intended to be limited to this play alone or, indeed, to the Theatre of Dionysus alone. Kreousa has come to Delphi to seek a cure for her barrenness, but at the end it is not only she who is healed, but also the city over which, as her very name indicates, her essence is to be the ruler. In the gradually deepening and ultimately overwhelming crisis of the Peloponnesian War, Euripides is asking how Athens became what it was and what it has to remember about itself if it is to continue to survive. If his legendary dramatic characters can manage to improve themselves in the course of his play and to discover, beyond the predictably human defects of misunderstanding, blindness, and self-interest, their deeper shared humanity—if indeed, as Athena promises, even Xouthos and Kreousa will be able to create a κοινὸν γένος ('a common race/offspring', 1589)—then perhaps, like these characters and through them, Euripides' troubled real contemporary audience will be able to improve themselves as well.

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[147] See above ch. 2.1. n. 1.

EPILOGUE

> *... nothing conclusive has yet taken place in the world ... the world is open and free, everything is still in the future and will always be in the future*
>
> Bakhtin[1]

This book has tried to show that the *Ion* was a complex work of art characterized by duality, dialogism and polyphony: the voice of the author is anything but obtrusive. Nevertheless I have argued that Euripides was trying to challenge his audience by the innovative way he handles what by 412 BC was already a traditional medium. We may sum up his intellectual program by saying, paradoxically, that the lesson is that there are no simple monologistic lessons. The political program was also complex, and for that reason alone (quite apart from the absence of crude state interference in Athenian drama)[2] it would be wrong to call the play 'propaganda': propaganda is strident and monologistic. But the *Ion* not only blends autochthony and Ionianism in a subtle and ingenious mix, it does not even use Ionianism in a simple way: the Athenian colonization of Attica, the Cyclades and Ionia is predicted and asserted, as is Ion's seniority to Dorus; but at the same time we are reminded not only that the Ionians are Athens' kin by the usual colonizing metaphor, but also that Dorus and Ion are in fact brothers. This is, in fact a sort of panhellenism because of the known Spartan associations of Dorianism. These were delicate issues and had to be handled obliquely and by exploiting the two-facedness of myth. Phrynichus was perhaps the last tragedian to handle the Ionian theme so explicitly, and he seems to have done so in an unacceptably frontal and direct fashion. All his successors, including Euripides, must have taken note. After Phrynichus, politics in tragedy, if it was to be there at all, must be

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[1] Bakhtin 1984: 166 (his italics).

[2] See Gould & Lewis 1988: 364 for the slippery evidence for dramatic censorship at Athens; and cf. below for Phrynichus. For warnings about the use of the word 'propaganda' for classical antiquity, see Hornblower in *OCD*[3] under 'propaganda'.

insinuated and suggested. In 412, in the aftermath of national humiliation, that must have been true more than ever.

The *Ion* is at another level a play about oracular Apollo. We recall that after the terrible news from Sicily reached Athens, the Athenians were angry with their politicians and also with the 'oracle-mongers and seers who by divination had raised their hopes of taking Sicily'.[3] Pythian Apollo was of course no cheap oracle-monger, but it would not be surprising if in some quarters the mood in March 412 was one of general scepticism, and that some of the sceptical remarks in the play would have been heard with silent applause. And yet by the end of the play Apolline foresight has been vindicated, albeit after suffering some damage and derailing on the way. Crucially, the predictions about Athenian colonizing and thus imperial greatness depend on the accuracy of the prophecy transmitted by Apollo's agent Athena, the city's tutelary deity. If we cross from play to audience, we can well believe that the conciliatory reassurances offered by Athena were desperately needed and welcome at this time of civic emergency.

The oligarchs of 411 were able to exploit the mood of indignation against demagogues. They were also, and this is important, able to exploit ignorance.[4] Their cries of 'back to Solon!' and 'back to Kleisthenes!' were a confidence trick: neither of those two reformers had in reality disfranchised the thetes as the oligarchs pretended, and it was breathtaking impudence to suggest that the events of 411 were any sort of return to the 'ancestral constitution'. As with all confidence tricks, the surprise is that it succeeded; as Thucydides himself comments, 'it was no easy matter to deprive the Athenians of their liberty after a century, during most of which time they had been accustomed to rule over others.'[5] After 410, the Athenians resolved never again to let the constitution be hi-jacked in this way and they gave instructions for a codification of the laws. Ignorance had opened the door to distortion of historical and intellectual truth, and that door must henceforth be kept shut: this was the certainty achieved by 410, and the atrocities of the preceding year were the

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[3] Thuc. 8.1.2.

[4] I do not give detailed references for the historical facts in this section; for an admirable recent succinct account, see Andrewes 1982. For the connection between the codification of the laws and the oligarchic revolutions, see e.g. Rhodes 1994: 567.

[5] Thuc. 8.68.4.

price of its achievement. But back in March 412, the intellectual mood was anything but certain. Outright oligarchy was still in the future, but the democracy had already taken steps which indicated unease.[6] The volatility of Athenian public opinion in these months is brilliantly conveyed by Thucydides in the opening chapter of book Eight: a huge mood-swing from 'fear and panic', φόβος τε καὶ κατάπληξις, to the firm resolve a few lines later 'not to submit', μὴ ἐνδιδόναι, but to launch on energetic military and naval action. Euripides must have been aware that at that moment of all moments, a moment of puzzlement and contradiction, simple political solutions and strident preaching were to be avoided. But nevertheless truth was in demand. I have argued that his fondness for pluralism was already well established before 412 and the date of the production of the *Ion*, but now, perhaps, was an exceptionally good moment for the voice or voices of pluralism and pluralistic truth to be heard. Nor should we forget the sister-play *Helen*, which treats, after all, an originally Spartan heroine (we can say little about the lost *Andromeda*) and hints towards the end at her future Attic cult on an offshore island. The mood in 412 was, I suggest, specially appropriate for a play which runs through vicissitudes and narrowly avoided horrors but closes with Ionianism triumphant and hints at a panhellenic solution. In the same way the Athenians at this time passed through mood-swings and political and military vicissitudes but kept their empire intact and managed (though without in the end the compromises which panhellenism i.e. meaningful pacific gestures towards Sparta would have entailed) to retain the loyalty of their allies in Ionia.

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[6] See above ch. 1.1. n. 8 for the appointment of the *probouloi*.

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